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SKETCHES
of a
YACHTING CRUISE.



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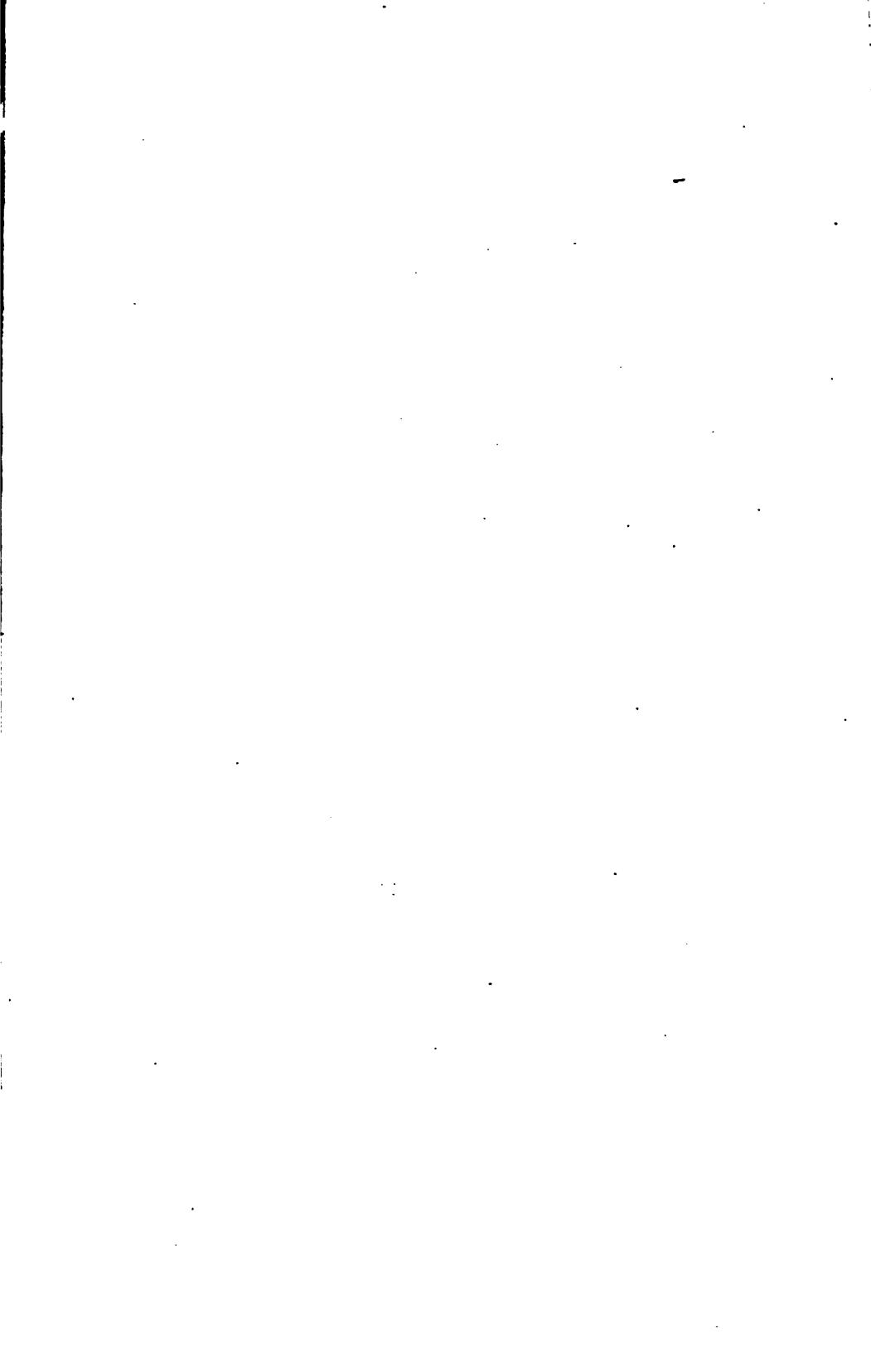
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1874

OUTWARD BOUND.

SKETCHES

OF A

YACHTING CRUISE.

BY

MAJOR GAMBIER PARRY,

AUTHOR OF "SUAKIN, 1885," "REYNELL TAYLOR, A BIOGRAPHY,"
ETC., ETC.

With Illustrations by the Author.

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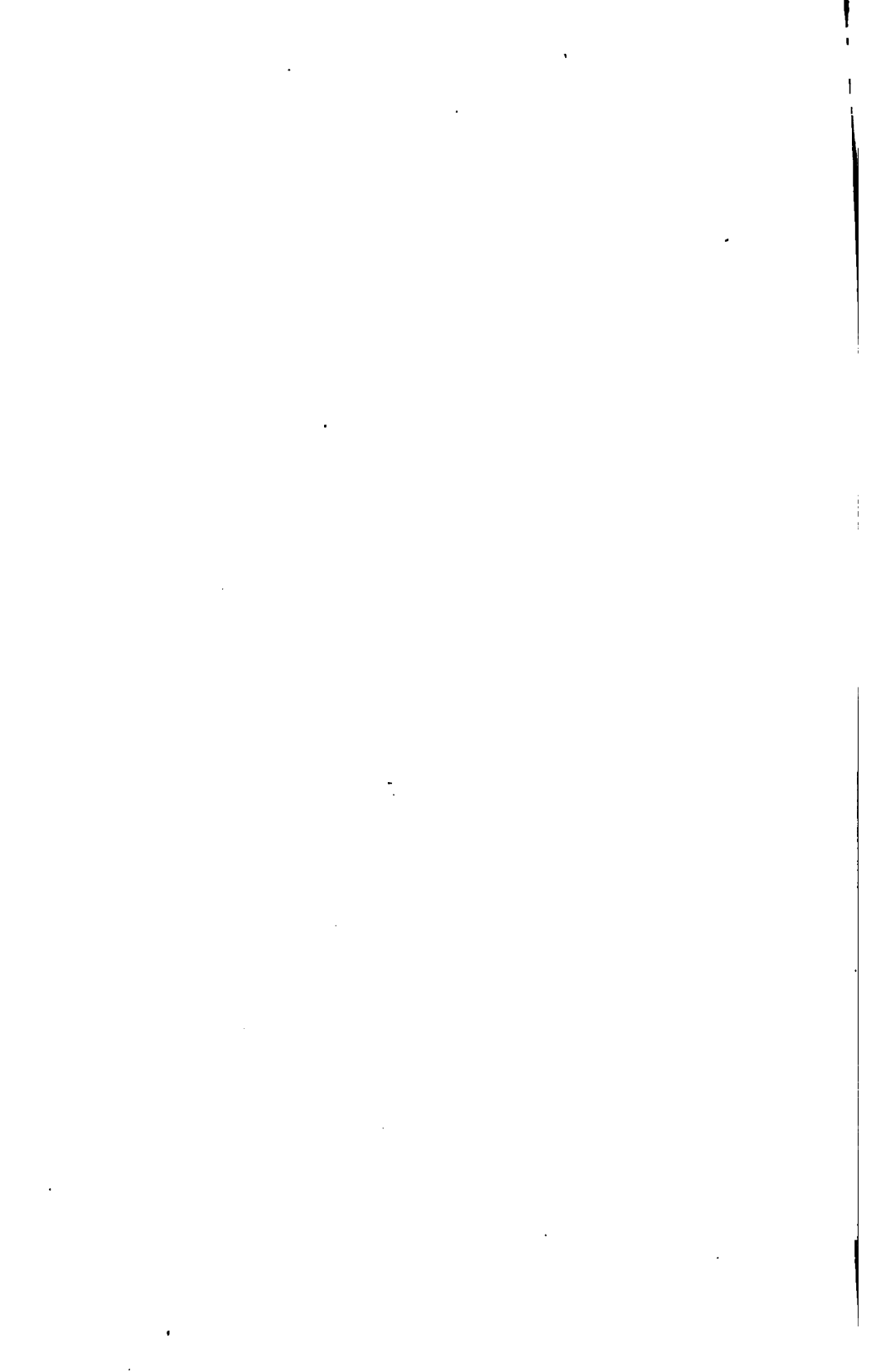
PREFACE.



A PREFACE to a volume such as this is unnecessary save on one count—as an apology. The places referred to are already familiar to many, and the road traversed is year by year becoming familiar to many more. All there is to tell has been told: the choicest flowers by the way-side have been picked long since, and those that are left have lost their freshness.

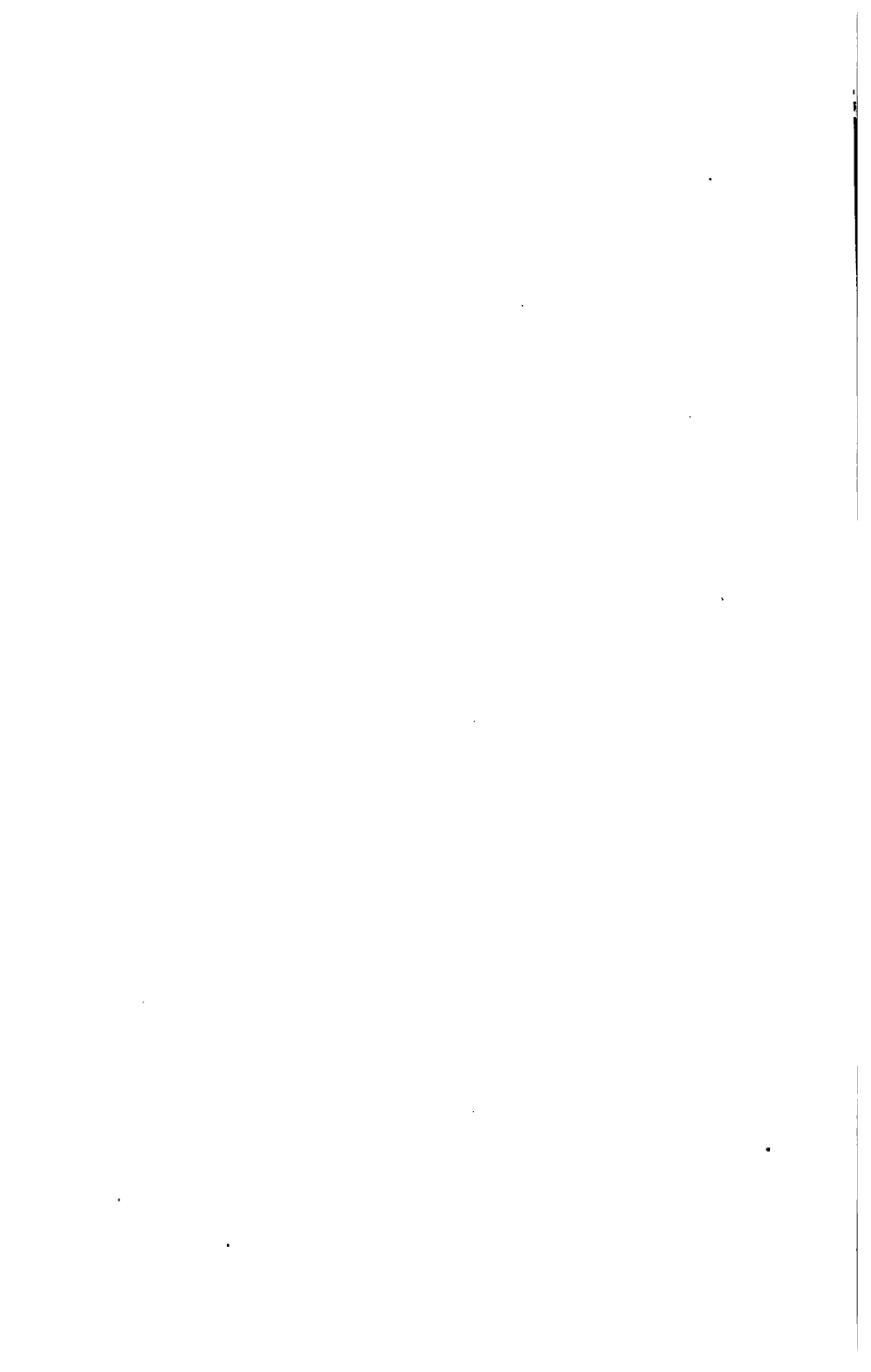
It would be idle, then, to pretend that anything new will be found in these Sketches. The most I can hope for is that they may recall happy days to those, whose lives are now spent in harness, and whose time and increasing responsibilities no longer allow leisure for foreign travel. If they do this I shall be repaid. I would only ask that the many shortcomings in the illustrations, as in the text, may be pardoned.

E. G. P.



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SKETCHES

OF A

YACHTING CRUISE.

CHAPTER I.

OUTWARD BOUND.

"PEAK her for a fair wind!" "Yo, ho!" "Once more boys!" "Ya, hai!" "Belay."

"Up anchor!" The bars are in the capstan, and all hands are at work in a minute; the cheery "chink" "chink" of the pawls resounds over the deck, and the cable is gradually stowed, fathom by fathom, in the lockers; the anchor is tripped, and then the sails, after flapping lazily, fill; the yacht pays off, and is under way.

There is a charm in yachting which, once experienced, never dies. Given a well-found yacht of Cowes build, and leisure for a four or five months' cruise in pleasant company, together with a certain other condition which shall be nameless, and the pastime of yachting will assuredly be found to have few equals.

Did not Thales contend that the sea was the mother of all life? and is there not life in every breath that blows over its restless surface? Is there not a sense of freedom connected with the open sea to which all other conditions of life are strange, freedom from worries, freedom from cares, freedom even from the penny post and the conventionalities and restraints of what the world calls society? The air is filled with a brightness and gladness, and fresh vivific energies are wafted on every breeze; even the thought of troubles comes tinged with a certain inconsistency, and though some have found a ring of sadness in the sound of the sea, it seems as though sorrow could find no place among waves that are always dancing, and among waters which carry with them every colour of the rainbow. There is happiness in being on its surface, and a pleasure—a deep pleasure—is to be derived from watching its moods at every hour of the day and night.

But as there is no pleasure without pain, so most assuredly there is no sport without a spice of danger in it. The storm encountered, and after a hard battle, may be, weathered, serves to brace the nerves at the time, and when seas have gone down, and the sun shines again in the heavens, there comes a feeling of satisfaction at the danger past, and a sense of having battled successfully with nature in one of her grandest and most terrible moods. It is not the sailing over calm summer seas that makes one love a yacht; it is the dirty weather run safely through; the dangers encountered, when the seas have roared in the darkness

and the wind has rushed past us over the surface of the great waters ; it is the recollection of storms fought out in company that makes one look upon a yacht as a living being, and causes one at last to love her as a friend.

A gale at sea must always be rough work, alike in the largest steamer as in a sailing yacht, but, if the yacht be well manned and well handled, you are as safe in her as in the biggest vessel afloat. Give her fair play, treat her honestly, and do not ask impossibilities of her, and she will take you through the worst weather you can meet, and bring you safely, though it may be mauled, into that smooth water that lies beyond the zone of every storm.

Anyone standing on the quays at Southampton on the morning of November 21, 188—, might have seen a schooner of some 180 tons burthen spread her sails to the wind and glide slowly down "The Water," till she was lost to sight amongst the shipping which plies so incessantly up and down that busy part of England's coast.

She was outward bound on a long cruise ; the days of fitting out had come to an end at last, and, without any fuss, she had quietly weighed anchor and floated out on the ebb, with scarcely wind enough to fill her sails. Her name was *Ptarmigan*.

A fair wind in the Channel carried her as far as the Start by one o'clock on the morning of the 22nd, but, as day broke, this gradually died away. By noon the glass began to fall slowly. At sunset the weather looked

anything but kind ; the wind drew southerly, and rain fell. Bad weather was coming and no doubt about it.

"Snug her down for a gale, boys!" was the order ; so sail was at once reduced, topmasts housed, and everything made ready for fighting out the weather.

At midnight the wind suddenly flew into W.N.W., and blew a gale, the sea at the same time running very high ; the yacht was accordingly hove to for a while under reefed trysail and storm staysail.

Morning broke with the weather as bad as ever, but the Captain hoped to get out of it and held on. The day passed ; the night closed in ; the morning broke again, and still the weather moderated not a bit. The sea roared and the wind blew ; the sky became darker and darker all round ; but the yacht behaved splendidly, and she was in good hands.

The next day, and the next, passed without a change, till, on the night of the 27th, the weather grew, if it were possible, even worse. The glass was at 29"·40 and still continued to fall ; the yacht's position being 40° 7' N. Lat., 5° 50' W. Long. ; well out in the middle of that dreaded Bay of Biscay, where man has so often battled bravely for days and nights with storm and tempest, and where deeds of heroism have been performed of which not one soul has lived to tell the tale. Far beyond the reach of succour from any earthly hands, many a sailor has struggled here for very life, clinging to some spar or other flotsam, till at length, worn out, he has let go his hold and found a grave in the cold black waters of the Bay of Biscay. The

storm sweeps across the maddened sea, and dashes onward to the coasts of England. The angry gusts tell those ashore it is a wild night; the wind whistles round the lonely cottage; the rain is flung against the lattice window, shaking the lead-bound panes, and the single candle within flickers in the draught. An anxious face is peering through the darkness to where the white surf is thundering on the beach, and a short "God help them" is whispered between quivering lips. Ah! God help them, it is indeed; but days will pass and no news will come, till at last the ship will be classed as "missing," and no more will be heard then of Joe or Tom, the husband of the young wife who lives up in the cottage yonder, just beneath the cliff, till the day when the sea at last gives up her dead, and he and she meet hand in hand once more.

Those on the *Ptarmigan* were far too busy, though, for thoughts like these.

At midnight on the 27th a terrific gale was blowing, and, the wind having gone round more to the southward, the Captain determined to heave dead to. All went well until 4 A.M.; the yacht had shipped little water and had behaved splendidly, and everyone on board hoped that now they would be able to ride out the rest of the gale where they were.

This was, however, not to be, for the men at the helm suddenly reported that the rudder-head was straining, and on the Captain making an inspection, this was found to be only too true—indeed, it was almost twisted off. Of all the accidents that may

happen to a ship—fire and collision excepted—anything affecting the helm is the worst. Let the sea make a clean sweep of the decks, and let spars and bulwarks be carried away, at least a rag of some sort can be rigged and the vessel steered; but take away the rudder, and the ship becomes at once unmanageable, for to fix anything of a jury rudder in an Atlantic gale passes the power of man.

"I am sorry to say, Sir, that I have bad news to report," said the Captain to the owner of the *Ptarmigan*, in the small hours of the morning of the 28th.

"I am sorry for that," said C——; "what's up now?"

"Well," replied the Captain, "the rudder-head is nearly twisted off, and with the heavy strain of this sea it cannot hold much longer. What would you wish me to do, Sir?"

"Do? Why do exactly what you would if I was not on board," said C——, preparing at the same time to come on deck and see for himself.

"There is nothing for us, Sir, but to put her before it, and run for the Channel, though it is a good bit to ask of a vessel in such a sea as this, and I know nothing of her running capabilities. One thing is certain, it won't do for us to stop where we are, and we must chance it, Sir," and with this the Captain returned on deck.

As soon as a tiller had been rigged, the wheel and steering-gear were unshipped. Then the sea was watched for a moment or two; a favourable opportunity was seized, and round went the yacht before the wind,

scudding along before the gale at fearful speed. The vast volumes of water followed her and towered above her, threatening every moment to descend and, in one instant, to dash her to atoms. But she fled on under bare poles before the gale, reared at one moment high in the air, lowered at the next into a deep valley, where smaller waves leaped at her sides, where the air was filled with the roar of the storm, and the spray was caught up and sent swirling on the wind. "Wonders in the deep" face to face; the great waters maddened by the winds of heaven, and lashed into a fury which no power could assuage; a gale, a stern reality at last, and to be fought out now in a yacht of 180 tons with a damaged helm. The rudder still held with the help of the lashings round the tiller and head, but all on board knew that it might carry away at any moment. Throughout the 28th the weather continued the same, and all day and all night the yacht raced on before the gale. The morning of the 29th broke with the air thick, and the sky still black overhead. No observations had been possible for three days, and the yacht's whereabouts could only be guessed.

On the night of the 29th the rudder-head at last twisted completely off. The chock over the head was immediately cut away; a couple of eye-bolts were driven in on each side of the rudder below the deck, and a quantity of seizing wire was passed through these and others placed on each side of the tiller. Two of the iron gangway-stanchions were also driven into the fore part of the rudder and lashed to the

tiller, and thus the helm was strengthened as far as possible. A bag of oil was hung out from one of the after-davits, and with this safeguard the seas were prevented in a great measure from breaking in board.

All hands were now beginning to feel the heavy strain they had had to bear. For eight days the storm had raged around them, and the condition of the yacht had for most of that time given cause for the gravest anxiety. No observations had latterly been possible; soundings had been attempted, and the result of these seemed to indicate the whereabouts as the Channel. At last, on the afternoon of the 29th, a large steamer was caught sight of for a moment, and the Captain, thinking that she was bound up Channel, altered his course by hers. It was fortunate he did so. Early in the morning of the 30th he made the Start, and before mid-day the *Ptarmigan* had dropped her anchor in the peaceful harbour of Dartmouth.

The wind had gone down, the sky had cleared, and the sun was now shining brightly. Picturesque Dartmouth, with its quaint, old-fashioned houses grouped along the water's edge, looked very quiet and very peaceful after the eight days' fight in the raging storm. The circling waters of the Dart were undisturbed by even a ripple, and on the wooded slopes the leaves still hung tenaciously to many of the trees, tinting them with the last golden hues of autumn; the smoke ascended skywards from the cottage chimneys, or hung in blue wreaths about the hill-sides, and the

yacht, which a few hours before had been racing for her life, now lay motionless and at rest in still waters.

A fortnight to refit, and we are off again, dancing over the waves at ten knots, with a fair wind aft, and the shores of England gradually settling down into a faint blue line astern. No bad weather stopped us this time, and in a few days we were entering the Straits of Gibraltar, and heading up for the famous Rock.

What a current that is that runs through the narrow channel dividing the continents of Europe and Africa. It is a hard matter to get through "the Gut" with a head wind, even with the current to help you, and it is no uncommon sight to see upwards of a hundred sailing vessels, of all manner of rigs, working for days to get out of the Mediterranean when the wind is against them. After a while they seem to tire of trying, and one and all go about and run back for anchorage to the Eastern Beach. Here they cluster together waiting for a change, every day growing in numbers, till at last, and often suddenly, the air begins to grow thick to the eastward, and a faint swell becomes visible on the surface of the sea. In an instant every ship is busy getting under way. For a short while the Gut is filled with a crowd of vessels, and then, like a flock of birds flushed by some passer by, they are gone. As luck would have it, we carried the fair wind through the Straits, and in an hour or two we were darting in and out among the hulks and shipping in Gibraltar bay. It wanted but half an hour to sunset as we dropped anchor at the New

Mole. The sky to the westward was bathed in a wealth of colour, and as the sun sank behind the hills of Algeciras the whole bay glowed with crimson light.

I must pass over Gibraltar without notice; but that night on board the yacht at the New Mole was filled with dreams of days long gone by: dreams of six happy years spent in the best quarter for soldiers out of England. At one moment I was galloping with the Calpe hounds over the Alcadezas or through the cork woods; at the next, riding steeplechases or playing polo on Campamento common. Then the scene would change and there was a sound of music, a stirring sound of many bands playing together. The whole of the troops in garrison were deployed into line in front of me, and the General was riding down the ranks in a silence broken only by the silvery sound of the massed bands, sometimes loud and echoing up the Rock, and sometimes soft, but always playing the same slow march to the throbbings of big drums. But while the long lines of bayonets were still glittering in front of me, the whole picture gradually grew dim, and the beat of the drum was changed to a slow measured tramp of a sentry over head. I was a subaltern again on the Waterport Guard, with the rats fighting for the candle on the table, and the poultry in the Moorish market close by keeping up a constant crowing through the night. Then the door of the guard-room opened and a person stood before me, who for more than twenty years was as much a part of the Rock as the batteries which encircle it; a man who, in his day, was little short of an autocrat in all matters connected with

guards and sentries, and before whom subalterns trembled. He had a curious and somewhat comical expression of countenance, grey whiskers, and black curly hair, and when administering a rebuke in connection with some trivial omission or oversight—always a heinous neglect of duty in his eyes—he had a habit of clipping his words and of accompanying each remark with a bow. “My friend,” he began, bending forward in a peculiar manner from the hips, “My friend, of course you don’t know that the key sergent did not report himself last evening—no, no.” Did the great Town Major stamp his foot as he said this, or had the rats, in quarrelling over the soap, knocked the soap-dish into the basin? No, it was morning gun-fire, and as I jumped up in my bunk “Reveille” was sounding: the garrison was waking to another day, and from far and near the old familiar call was ringing out on the still, clear air. It was a dream after all, and the dream, like the happy times it pictured, had passed away.

The first day of a new year, ushered in with a bright sky and a warm sun, and scarcely enough air stirring to fill the sails. Getting under way early, however, and floating lazily out of the New Mole, we found a little more wind at Europa Point, and thus we soon passed from the busy, bustling side of Gib to the lonely and uninhabited eastern face, where the great, grey, massive cliffs rear themselves out of the sea, and where the echoes of restless waters are never still.

From the typical English garrison town of Gibraltar, with its atmosphere of method, rule, and cleanliness, to

dirty, struggling Malaga is only a sail of fifty-seven miles. "Slay a king and go to Malaga," runs the Spanish proverb; but though Malaga has been over and over again upset by revolutionary demagogues, decimated by plagues, and tumbled about by earthquakes, there is yet an air of prosperity about the place, and its harbour is always crowded to excess. Though given a bad name, Malaga has been blessed with a most beautiful climate, and its fertile *vega* produces coffee, sugar, and fruits of all kinds. But who will stay at Malaga when a few hours by train will take him to a place renowned before all others for its scenery and its historical associations? Granada seems to possess attractions which may be looked for in vain elsewhere. Few places can compare with that thickly-planted hill where the elm-trees grow closely side by side, and give impenetrable shade. It may be that you have been worshipping at the shrine of the good queen, Isabella, whom you fell in love with years ago on reading Prescott's immortal work. Weary with the heat and dust of the town, you enter beneath the great Moorish gateway. In a moment the scene around you is completely changed. The noise of the streets gives place to the rippling of water, which flows in tiny rivulets on either side as you wend your way along the narrow paths between the trees. The first green leaves of early spring are beginning to fleck the labyrinth of branches above you, and the ground is carpeted with young grass. You look up at the blue sky and catch sight of the snowy ridge, the Sierra Nevada, which seems as if it joined the wood in which you stand, so close is it. Then you enter

that marvel of delicate beauty, the Alhambra, where you wander undisturbed from court to court, surrounded by some of the most perfect examples of Moorish architecture. Every inch of surface is incrustated with ornament, and scarcely a wall or ceiling remains without some trace of the gorgeous colouring and ornamentation which at one time overlaid it. Though four centuries have swept by since Abdallah surrendered the keys of the fortress to Ferdinand and Isabella, the Alhambra, thanks to the climate, bears comparatively few traces of the hand of time; and this, though the keen air from the snowy Sierra circulates at will throughout the building, and though neither door nor casement bars entrance to wind and rain.

It is impossible to look across the lovely *Vega* of Granada from one of these open casements, without letting the thoughts run back to the great event with which the Alhambra must always be associated. It was these old walls and towers encircling the gem that crowns the hill, which witnessed the first act of a great drama. During eight centuries the Moors had risen to the very summit of their attainments as a nation; they had covered the land with those monuments which still remain the wonder of all who behold them; they had raised themselves from a condition of barbarism to one of comparative civilization; but they had by degrees sunk again into a condition of impotent degeneracy and slothful indifference. On the termination of the war of Granada their final extinction and decay was merely a matter of time. Ten years had sufficed to overturn the

work of nigh eight centuries, and though a hundred years of unmerited persecution followed before the survivors of a once magnificent race were finally driven out of Europe, these last remained only as wanderers in a land which still flourished on the fruits of their past industry. A new nation gradually supplanted them; a nation which has in its turn risen to a pinnacle of power unattained by any people in modern history, but one which has long since fallen from its high position among the kingdoms of the world. Generation follows generation, and while Spain is torn by internal dissension and rent with civil war, the Moors in further Morocco, on certain Fridays in the year, hang up a petition in their mosques and pray that Allah will see fit to restore to them the lands from which they have been wrongfully expelled.

A still evening; the hum of busy Malaga, mingled with the deep tones of great cathedral bells, coming to us over the oily surface of the sea; the light dying fast out of the western sky, and night creeping over the eastern horizon. The red rocks of the hills, the white houses dotted here and there among the vineyards, the crowded mass of shipping in the narrow harbour, all toning down into one homogeneous tint of blue-grey. The yacht lying becalmed two miles out with every sail set, waiting for the land breeze; her head pointing first one way and then another according to the whim of passing currents, and the man at the helm spinning the wheel round to pass the time, or whistling for the wind.

The breeze came at last, ruffling the water as it stretched further and further out from the shore; there was a rippling sound under the counter, and the yacht at length began to move. Slowly and almost imperceptibly we glided along at first, but by degrees the wind freshened and we set our squaresail and raffy. Once up, our light canvas was never taken in again till we had completed a run of nearly four hundred miles, and were entering the bay of Algiers.

It would be hard to forget those first days in the Mediterranean, when the weather was so glorious and the wind so kind. Day by day the sun rose in a cloudless sky; we took our observations by him at noon, and watched him sink slowly below the horizon in the evening: then, as darkness came on, and our wake turned from a path of foam to one of sparkling gold, the sky above us deepened to sapphire hue, and the heavens were studded with a thousand jewels.

Does any situation bring more directly home to the mind the vastness of the work of the Creator, than being afloat in the solitude of the boundless ocean, with nothing around you but the great deep, and with nothing above but the firmament of the heavens? Surely a man may obtain a more complete idea of his own utter insignificance, and arrive at a truer appreciation of the greatness of his Maker, in one night spent at sea in the quiet of a sailing vessel, than by a hundred and one days ashore, even if he be there surrounded by the grandest scenery nature can put before his eyes.

But the quiet of a sailing vessel is now, to the

traveller, almost a thing of the past, and the majority of yachts even, cruising in foreign waters, are steamers. It is the influence of the times. We are no longer satisfied with any element of uncertainty in our travels. Our ocean-going steamers must run with as much exactitude as our trains. We must leave England one day and be in America seven days later. We run any risks; we dash along in the inky blackness of the night at eighteen knots, chancing the icebergs and risking collision; we are no longer content with trains of ordinary speed; we fly over the country and over the sea; and thus we annihilate distance and economise time, but the romance of travel becomes more and more a thing of the past.

The magnificent scenery of the southern coast-line of Andalusia has faded away, and even the highest points of the Sierra Nevada are no longer visible. Cape Gata light has dipped below the horizon ere we turn in for the night; and when morning breaks the high lands of another continent are visible to the south-east, like so many islands studding the sea. The west wind blows fresh, and the sea is calm, and for three days we sail along on a even keel averaging from five to six knots.

The first impression conveyed by the coasts of Algeria is that of a country of extraordinary richness and fertility. In the neighbourhood of Algiers the land rises in gentle slopes from the sea, and the pastures and corn-fields, the vineyards and olive-groves, the patches of deep-red plough-land, the endless small, white, farm-houses dotted everywhere over the landscape, and the flocks and herds browsing by the river-banks, make up



EL CATANI POINT.

a picture of no ordinary beauty. But when to this is added the brilliant atmosphere of the south, when the whole landscape is shimmering in the warm rays of a morning sun, then the colouring assumes a tone approaching gaudiness, and the sombre groups of cypresses serve only to accentuate the glitter in which nature is revelling.

For several hours we sailed slowly along close in shore. The wind had died away as we neared the land, and it took us many hours to round Catani Point. Then Algiers came gradually into view, and before sunset we had dropped anchor in its magnificent harbour.



CHAPTER II.

ALGERIA.

ALGIERS viewed from the sea is more striking than picturesque, and, excepting the magnificent quays and the boulevard immediately above them, the town presents a front of flat-topped, chimneyless, houses, piled one above the other and close together, and rising tier above tier from the sea in a glare of dazzling whiteness.

Ashore it is different. Every street is full of colour, life, and interest, and from the bustle and noise of Western civilisation to the primitive simplicity of Eastern life is here, if anywhere, a short step. At one moment you may be threading your way through the Rue Bab Azzoun where all the races of the world seem to be jostling one another on the pavement, and where the road is choked with tram-cars and bullock-waggons, calèches and over-weighted camels; and in the next you may have passed, as if by magic, into steep and winding alleys, where the stillness is only broken by the bell of the water-carrier or the shuffling of slippered feet. In

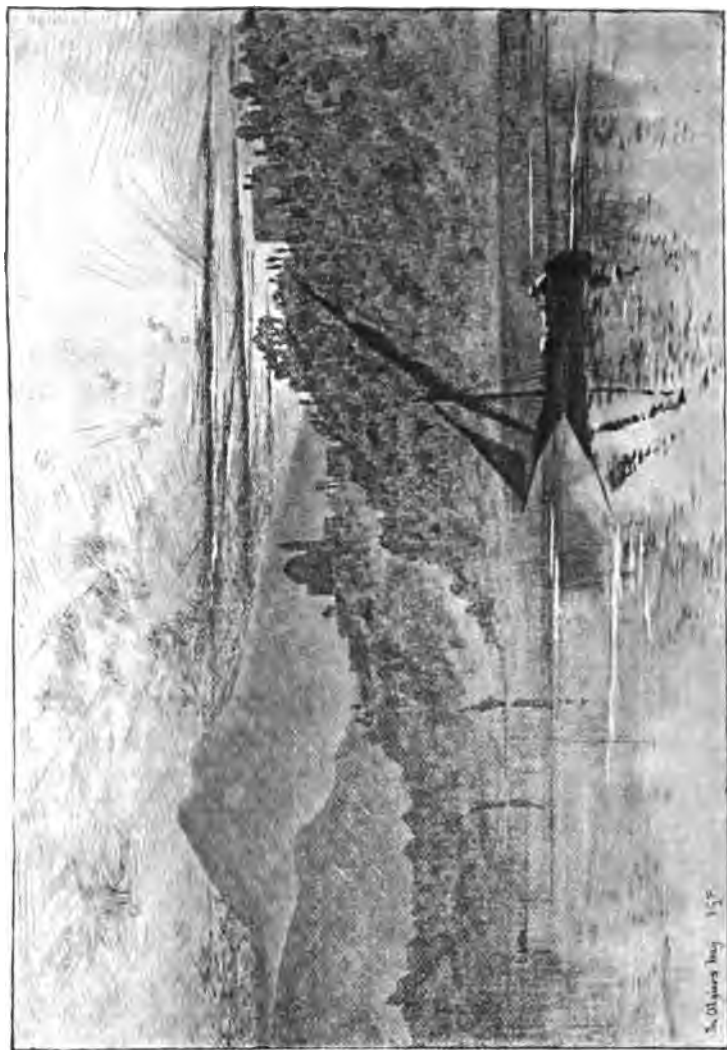
Algiers you may sit on the Boulevard de la Republique and sip your coffee, surrounded by smart Paris dresses and still smarter uniforms ; or you may lounge on the Place de Gouvernement and never tire of watching a throng of Arabs, with the dust of the desert still upon them ; you may go to the opera and see the latest development of Parisian ballet, or you may attend an Aissaoui Festival and come away sickened with the horrors you have witnessed, and it seems as if constant change and variety were among the chief attractions of this brilliant city.

But if you would eschew the attractions of the town, there is another side of life at Algiers which is scarcely less pleasing. In the suburbs, at Mustapha, you may live in cool houses beneath the shade of palm trees, with the bougainvillea covering your roof feet deep with purple bloom, and the poinsettia and hibiscus bushes around you, vying with each other in their shades of emerald and blood-red.

Mustapha is very beautiful, but what is town or country without sunshine ? An Arab draggled in wet is a sorry sight, and gorgeous flowers torn by the wind and trailed in mud appear out of place in a southern climate. This, however, was what we saw plenty of during our stay at Algiers. Our first morning was bright and warm ; we spent it paddling about the great harbour and fishing up from the bottom prickly echini, crimson-coloured star-fish, and anemones of every hue, from the brightest orange to deep purple and red. But here the fine weather ended, and by the afternoon all

warmth and sunshine had disappeared. For the next ten days we had a series of gales, with all the usual concomitants. The great green waves dashed against the northern breakwater and thundered on the rocks, sending the spray fifty or sixty feet up into the air. The heavy sea outside raised a disagreeable swell in the harbour, and the crew had plenty to do letting out chain and getting out warps, to prevent the yacht from being driven ashore. On the fourth day of this kind of weather, the wind worked round to the N.N.E., rain and hail fell alternately, and we found it necessary to cast off our shore warps and let another anchor go. It was difficult to get ashore—a pull of half a mile from where we were moored—without getting a ducking, for there was quite a respectable sea in the harbour, and the waves were now breaking clear over the eastern jetty. Yet in spite of these drawbacks we made good use of our time and drove all over the surrounding country.

To the minds of many it may seem curious to complain of cold at Algiers. The name Africa is synonymous with heat; Algiers is in Africa, therefore Algiers must be a warm place. But this is scarcely the case in the winter months, and the climate of the town of Algiers, of the suburbs of Mustapha Supérieur, and of St. Eugène, is materially affected by the northerly winds prevalent at that season of the year. There are people who consider that these winds lose their keenness before reaching the coast, but I must confess that during a trial of ten days we found the north-easters of Algeria possessed the usual disagreeable qualities of north-



IN ALGIERS BAY.

easters in other parts of the world, and we were not only glad of our thickest coats when driving, but a fire in the main cabin was an absolute necessity.

This is no place for an exhaustive consideration of the climate of Algiers, but there is one point regarding it which is not without interest, and this is the effect the aspect of the bay of Algiers has upon the growth of certain plants.

In a southern climate such as this, a more luxuriant growth might be expected than is found, for instance, on the south coast of France; but the orange and the lemon do not grow here in the way they do at Nice and St. Remo, nor does the olive thrive as in the neighbourhood of Mentone. On the southern slopes of the range of hills which skirt the bay, known as the Sahel, lemons and oranges grow well enough, and at Blidah, Boufarik, and about the Metidja plain they appear to thrive, but in the immediate neighbourhood of Algiers they are not met with in any numbers. At the Jardin d'Essai, snugly situated at the foot of the Sahel and quite close to the sea, a world of palms, yuccas, bananas, orchids, lovely flowering creepers, and a whole host of other plants, too numerous to mention, may be seen growing with a luxuriance worthy the tropics. Here you may walk along avenues, a quarter of a mile in length, of *Chamærops humilis*, *Latania borbonica*, and *Dracæna draco*, of giant bamboos, and wide-spreading indiarubber trees, while within a hundred yards of you great green seas are lashing themselves into a fury on the shore. But the wind does not reach you, and the dead leaves

on the garden paths are scarcely disturbed by so much as a passing gust. Even the bananas can flourish without fear of being torn, and the great plane trees retain their dead foliage far on into the winter. The reason of this is not at once apparent, but, perhaps, it may be accounted for in this way. Immediately behind the gardens is the tangled, wooded Sahel, covered with a jungle of ilex, caroub, cypress, wild olive, cistus, mimosa, and eucalyptus; the hills are steep; the winds which come sweeping across four hundred miles of sea do not blow home; and thus these beautiful gardens enjoy all the warmth of the climate without the blighting effects of the cold and heavy storms.

And now, at the expense of being a little dull, let us consider some other points in connection with this great French colony of Algeria. A great part of the country round Algiers, as all the world knows, is devoted to vine-growing, and beyond El Biar about Bou Zarea, Bab-el-Oued, and Frais Vallon land is constantly being cleared for this purpose; the people most energetic in the task being Spanish emigrants or Mahonais. Much of the country in the above neighbourhood is very hilly and rocky, and the labour of reclaiming and preparing it for cultivation is excessive. When once cleared, however, the soil is light, marvellously fertile, and excellently suited to the vine. Many of the hill-sides are too steep for a plough to be used even if the rocks and stones permitted it, and as an instance of the labour attending agricultural pursuits, in crossing a farm one day we noticed a primitive plough being drawn

by a team consisting of twenty-three oxen and three horses.

Land suitable for vineyards commands a high price, and little is now to be obtained within seven, eight, or even ten miles of Algiers at a lower figure than £45 an acre.* The value, however, varies considerably according to position and quality of soil; and further a-field, in the Metidja plain, for instance, land is occasionally to be bought at as low a price as £20 an acre, but there it is a long way from a market.

The work of clearing and preparing the land, together with the planting, costs, up to the end of the second year, little short of £40 an acre, so that starting a vineyard is an expensive undertaking. I have a letter before me now in which a friend who has been many years a resident and landowner in Algeria, says: "During the last two months I have planted five hectares that were in wood; they cost me 1,500 francs the hectare to plant; then comes this year's cultivation, and the next two as well, before any material return can be looked for." The future success of a vineyard depends greatly upon the care with which the original planting is carried out, and money judiciously expended at this period is saved in the end.

In spite of the large outlay, vineyards can be, and are made to pay very fairly well, and the produce when the vines have arrived at maturity, ought, on an average,

* The remarks on the value of land, taxation, &c., are derived from information supplied me by a friend who has been a landowner in Algeria for many years.

to be worth from £23 to £25 an acre, though from this must be deducted the cost of making as well as that of taking to market.

The value of a vineyard in full bearing varies according to the quality of the vines, care in original planting, position, and so forth ; and I am assured that a vineyard in the Sahel in which the vines are mature is worth at least £125 an acre.

Good labour is often difficult to obtain, for the Arabs are not, as a rule, industrious. Among the mixed population of Algeria the Kabyles are generally reckoned the best labourers. These people are Berbers by descent, and, though often confounded with the Arabs, are in reality a distinct race, speaking a different language, having a different cast of countenance, and a somewhat different dress, and being in almost every way superior to the Arabs of this part of the country, who are mostly Bedouins. The Kabyles occupy a vast tract of country to the eastward of Algiers, and live frugal, hardworking, lives amidst a glorious surrounding of mountains. Since the insurrection of 1871, when they threw in their lot with the rest of the Mahomedan population, they have been severely dealt with, and much of the freeness and contentment of their former existence is now a thing of the past. They were, of course, disarmed, and, over and above this, a head tax was levied on the country and a third of their land was taken from them. It is said that the Kabyles are becoming Christians in great numbers, but from information I received this would hardly appear to be the case.

The western portion of Algeria is one of the most fertile districts in the world. The Metidja plain, and the country round about Blidah and to the west of this, in the direction of Oran, is plentifully supplied with water. Desfontaines mentions a spot in the neighbourhood of Tremecen where there are two thousand springs in a circuit of two leagues, and yet the land is not the least swampy, owing to the varied surface of the country. In a hot climate, such as that of the interior of Algeria in summer time, the advantages accruing from a plentiful supply of water cannot be exaggerated. Crops flourish which otherwise would of necessity perish in the long annual period of drought. The farmer in these favoured parts of the country is able to keep his stock in a way that the less fortunate individual in Eastern Algeria, *i.e.* in parts of the province of Constantine, knows nothing of. The great difficulty in connection with agriculture in the interior is the exceeding heat of the dry season (June to September), for apart from the want of water, the sun ripens the crops too quickly, and a farmer, it is said, can only reckon on a good harvest once in three years. Pasturage, as we know it in our country, is seldom or never met with in the interior, and thus the best cattle are mostly found along the seaboard. In the neighbourhood, for instance, of Maison Carrée, Boufarik, Médéah, and Boghari, the cattle are few in number, and what there are are lean and small for want of keep.

In some districts a system of ensilage has been tried with excellent results, especially at Mondjebeur. From

a pamphlet on this subject, written by a French agriculturist, I find maize is reckoned to give the best return in point of grain, and the most bountiful growth for purposes of ensilage, thus fulfilling the double requirement of providing food for both man and beast. The writer adds that he counsels the general adoption of a system of ensilage as being the only means by which agriculture can be carried on in some parts of the country with any chance of success.

Along all the principal roads, as well as the railways, every available means has been adopted to collect water in the rainy season, and deep stone-lined gutters connected with gullies and watercourses in the hills are common sights enough in many parts of the country.

Before leaving the question of the land, there are one or two points needing reference. The transfer of land is most expensive, and often very difficult to carry through when Arabs are the vendors. The registration has been described to me as a registration of documents more than one of title. The courts will occasionally interfere between landlord and tenant, even in the face of agreements and leases, and will, in case of appeal, go so far as to direct the allowance, or rebate, to be granted to the farmer in bad seasons. It is obvious, therefore, that it is useless to trust in leases unless they are most carefully and stringently drawn, and no transactions of a business character should on any account be made without an agreement on stamped paper. There seems, in Algeria, to be a feeling that the courts are not altogether above favouritism, and that nationality,

politics, and creed, are factors not altogether overlooked. It is, of course, necessary to receive evidence on this point with caution, but there is certainly a cry among the natives that there is no justice for the Mussulman. However this may be, the administration of justice appears to be exceedingly slow, and the scales, by all accounts, are not always held strictly level in the hand.

Now as regards taxation, there is no actual tax on land as yet in Algeria, but there is a heavy poll tax, and the list of possessions subject to taxation is a long one, comprising houses, servants, horses, oxen, dogs, carriages, carts, &c. The taxes are collected by the commune or parish, the commune being virtually a corporation, with its own mayor appointed every three years by its municipality.

There are, however, exceptions to this method of appointing the mayor of a commune, for in some parts of the country, and always in the cities, the Government reserve to themselves, probably for political reasons, the right of appointing whom they think fit. It should be mentioned, that some of the communes in the interior of the country are partly under military rule. A group of communes make up a canton, the cantons being incorporated into one of the three departments, viz. Oran, Algiers, and Constantine, into which Algeria as a whole is divided. Each department is governed by a prefect, appointed by the Government, who has the power to supervise, and, if he thinks proper, to rescind resolutions and votes passed by the municipal and departmental councils, a power of no mean latitude.

The funds administered by the communes, over and above a part of the taxes locally collected, include also their shares of the "octroi de mer," collected at the various ports on imports, and distributed, it would appear, according to population or area.

The poor are, to a certain extent, tolerably well looked after by committees of *bienfaisance*, the funds for their relief being derived from taxes on theatre tickets and entertainments, and money voted for the purpose by the municipalities. The form of relief in the communes is almost entirely "out-door," in-door relief being controlled either by the department or the State. In some cases the municipalities provide a doctor, to whom they pay a small retaining fee, the individual looking for food and perquisites from those he attends.

Assistance is given to the Mussulman poor in the same way that it is to other classes in the country, but they depend principally on Mussulman charities, endowments of mosques, and those bequests which have been made by Mussulman chiefs for this particular purpose.

Education is free, and though nominally compulsory, is not in reality so. The mayor has power to fine for non-attendance, but I believe he very rarely exercises his right to do so, and thus, as in the case of many institutions in Algeria, the system is excellent in theory but falls far short of what it should be in practice.

Few people who have travelled much in Algeria could have helped noticing the excellent condition of the main roads, and the way in which they have been engineered. The French have always been renowned for their road-

making, and the main roads in Algeria certainly furnish good examples of what roads ought to be. They are divided into innumerable classes—national, departmental, rural, and so on—and though the system regarding their maintenance is somewhat complicated, it succeeds very well in certain cases. The national and departmental roads, forming the main trunk lines of communication through the country, are always well kept, but in the case of rural roads the responsibility is much divided, and the consequence is that they are often badly looked after and seldom repaired. There is a rule still in force in Algeria by which certain taxes are remitted in the case of so many days' work being performed on the roads, a rule for which, as some will remember, there was a parallel not so many years ago in our own country.

But I must leave this part of my subject, and turn to one of greater interest, I mean to the question of colonization,* and to the efforts which the French have made in this direction. Of the many difficulties with which they have had to contend in dealing with Algeria, I suppose none have exceeded those they have encountered in connection with this question of colonization, and ever since the year 1834, when France first announced her intention of retaining Algiers, the problem has occupied the earnest attention of her ministers.

The enormous sums of money voted from time to time

* My notes on the colonization question have been derived from local information; *La Colonization en Algérie*; report of M. le Comte d'Haussonville, and M. Mercier's *Algérie et les questions algériennes*.

for the purpose, and the inducements offered to those willing to settle in the country, have not been without material results, but the European element in the colony is still in the minority, and a large, and by far the most industrious portion of this element is not French at all, but is composed of people from Minorca, Majorca, Spain, and Italy. To read through the various reports and statements, relative to the outcome of the many attempts to solve the difficulty, is to be at first struck with the apparent hopelessness of the task, so far as the French themselves are concerned, and to feel rather forced to the conclusion that Frenchmen do not make good colonists. However this may be, it is impossible here to go very deeply into this part of the subject: we must rather be content to glance at some among the many efforts and experiments which have been made, and see with what success they have been attended.

Among the first, were the grants to soldiers in the country who had completed three years' service with the colours, but it was very soon discovered that unmarried men were not those most likely to settle down to agricultural pursuits in a strange land; so we find that many of these earlier settlers were given "*un congé de trois mois, au bout desquels ils étaient disciplinairement tenus de revenir en Algérie, munis chacun d'une épouse légitime.*" But the experiment, as may be imagined, was not altogether successful.

Between the years 1842-5 a certain number of centres were established by the creation of small villages in various parts of the country, but the greater proportion

of these were in the neighbourhood of Algiers itself. In 1848-9 no less a sum than fifteen million francs was voted towards the expenses of emigration, the number of colonists whom it was proposed to send to the country as a first batch amounting to 13,500. Each colonist was entitled to a house built at the expense of the State, a grant of land varying from four to twelve hectares, according to the number in family, also seeds, implements, and a few head of cattle, and, besides these, provisions until such time as the land was in cultivation or had begun to make some return to the occupier. It was confidently expected that these means would be attended with the greatest success, and that a new era of happiness and prosperity was about to commence. But by degrees these impressions were dispelled, and confidence in the experiment gradually grew weaker and weaker, until the closing months of 1849 showed that many of the colonists had already left their holdings and returned either to France or to the towns of the provinces. Good money, it appears, was thrown after bad, and a further sum was voted to defray the expenses of fresh emigrants as well as for the support of the colonists already established.

Perhaps the most disastrous of all the experiments was that of offering grants of land at low prices, or subject to merely nominal charges, for here the speculator stepped in, took up large tracts, and sold them again at a profit without ever having visited them himself.

Let us look at another instance of the expense to which

the country was put in endeavouring to find suitable colonists.

After the disasters of 1870-1, special grants of land were offered to French families wishing to emigrate to Algeria from Alsace and Lorraine, and numbers availed themselves of the opportunity. The cost was great, and in one estimate the expense of establishing 900 families has been assessed at no less a sum than 6,000,000 francs, or an average of little less than 7,000 francs per family of three, four, or five persons. If to this is added the approximate value of the land, it is estimated that each family emigrating from Alsace and Lorraine cost the country in round numbers no less than 10,000 francs. And now what had become of these families a few years later? We are told that "*malgré les efforts de l'administration et des comités, malgré les secours envoyés pendant plusieurs années de France, la réussite fut peu brillante comparativement aux effets et aux sacrifices faits. Quand on cessa de distribuer de l'argent et des vivres, un certain nombre d'Alsaciens rentrèrent chez eux ou se dispersèrent; d'autres attendirent l'expiration des cinq années du bail, vendirent leurs concessions depuis longtemps grevées et disparurent.*"

In the province of Constantine, again, the cost of establishing 4,082 families averaged 8,300 francs per family, including the value of the land conceded to them, and yet when the definite result obtained came to be inquired into in 1882 it was found that of the 2,487 families still living in the villages only 900 were employed

in cultivating the land, the rest having all sold their holdings or gone into the towns.

It may appear as if the worst was being made of the case, and nothing was being said on the other side of the question. It is, however, far from my wish to convey a false impression, for it would be ridiculous to suppose that there is not in Algeria a considerable element of successful French colonists. The questions before us are whether the enormous outlay made by the French Government during the last fifty years has really produced any adequate results, and whether the French-born subjects in the colony form any very material proportion of the population. To a stranger travelling in the country it seems difficult to answer these questions in the affirmative. To answer them at all, or to arrive at any just conclusion, would entail a very careful study of the subject, as well as a due following up of those notes and scraps of information which may be picked up here and there by any traveller of an inquiring turn of mind. A traveller's information can, in such a case as this, be little better than superficial, and I hesitate, therefore, to pursue the subject further. It is curious, however, to note the different way in which people in Algeria attempt to explain the want of success that has attended the various schemes of colonization. One will tell you that Frenchmen are altogether unfitted for colonists; a good many certainly come out fully intending to take up definite occupation as agriculturists, but after a short attempt they come back to the towns, many of them to do nothing, others to start

small cafés, and most of them, sooner or later, to find their way back to their own country and to that town which occupies so large a corner in the heart of every Frenchman. Another will account for it by saying that there is a feeling of insecurity, or that the quality of the colonists is the wrong sort of quality for the work in hand. A third will tell you that it is chiefly owing to the difficulties experienced by the colonist at the first start; that it is the moral and physical difficulties which encounter him on his arrival that too often end in discouragement, and that it is the hard struggle of the first year or two which too often breaks the man down and ends in his returning again with his unhappy family, sadder and poorer than when he first arrived. To some, no doubt, it will appear as if the question, one way or the other, was of little moment, but it must not be forgotten that France has a very considerable stake in the country, and that as long ago as twenty years she estimated Algeria to have cost her one hundred and twenty millions of money, and one hundred and fifty thousand lives. A mixed population in a colony must always be more or less a source of weakness to the holders of that colony, and when the population indigenous to the colony is foreign in manners, in customs, in religion, and in mode of life, to that of the nation ruling over it, so much the more is this weakness increased. If it is possible to infuse home blood into the land to such a degree that the native element shall in course of years gradually sink into a minority, so much the more does the source of weakness grow less, but if

by reason of climate, of geographical conditions or position, this is hard, if not impossible, to attain, then there is but one way of holding that colony, viz. in the same way that we hold India—by the sword. To a certain degree there is a parallel between Algeria as connected with France and India as connected with ourselves, but in many ways the conditions of the two dependencies are widely different. Take, for instance, one point. We hold India by the sword, yet many of the hands that wield those swords have been more than once arrayed against us as most gallant foes, and the native troops outnumber our own in the proportion, say, of two to one. In Algeria the converse is the case, the purely French force outnumbering the native, in very much the same proportion, for France does not draw many recruits from the indigenous population of the colony. As to the troops in Algeria, so far as I have been able to arrive at the figures, the French troops average 28,000, and the native troops, including the *Légion Étrangère*, 14,000 more, but these totals are constantly subject to variation. Of actual native troops there are, I believe, eleven thousand, viz. 8,500 Turcos and 2,500 Spahis, all of whom enlist voluntarily, there being no such thing as compulsory service for the native inhabitants. The difficulty in approximating to the actual strength of the army of Algeria, arises from the fluctuations in the strength and number of battalions composing the *Légion Étrangère*. Properly speaking, the *Légion* consists of several battalions of voluntarily enlisted recruits, Europeans, Spaniards, Austrians, and

Swiss, for the most part; but the nominal number of these battalions is often largely exceeded, the French War Office having practically unlimited powers in the way of recruiting. For instance, the force composing the Tonquin expedition was largely made up of battalions taken from the Légion, but as soon as ever these had left for active service, others were at once raised to fill their place. Most of the battalions of the Légion are relegated to service in the interior, and it is not uncommon to hear complaints of their being badly treated and poorly paid.

There is one feature in the country which must not be altogether omitted. Wherever in Algeria a few houses are found together, there you will most assuredly find also the eucalyptus—in the largest towns, and at the smallest station or commonest *cabaret* these trees have everywhere a place. They have been imported in millions, principally from Australia in seed form, both for hygienic reasons as well as for future use as timber. I heard of an Englishman who had purchased a large piece of land for the purpose of growing eucalyptus trees, and in the hope of making a large profit on them, as in ten years, in the Algerian climate, the tree is said to give excellent timber; the enterprise, however, did not, I believe, prove a success.

It is, I conceive, beyond question that the French have effected vast and extended improvements in the colony during the last thirty years, for to travel over the country is to see this at a glance; the roads and railways, the quantity of land under cultivation, the

land drainage and the husbanding of the water supply, the harbours, the condition of the native population, the activity, life, and improvements in the principal towns, and withal the rapidly increasing commercial prosperity so noticeable on all sides, are sufficient to convince, if, indeed, there were room for doubt. But there is still an ample field for future enterprise. Besides those places to which I have referred, look at all that grand expanse of hill and vale, and those giant slopes of undulating country to the northward and westward of Constantine. The plough more than either the axe or the pick is all that is required in many parts hereabout; much of the land is untenanted, save by those flocks and herds which seem to roam at will around the few scattered Arab hutments; trees are scarce—here and there a wild olive or two serving as landmarks in a country where all is as open and as bare as our Dartmoor, only on ten times the scale; small streams and rivulets wind in and out among the hills; and at intervals are villages, some large and some small. Then look again further inland at the mineral wealth of the country, untried to any great extent as yet; there is iron, lead, and copper here to be brought to bank, and other ores to be turned into money. The wine trade, too, is capable still of far larger development, and besides this, if no mention is made of tobacco-growing, Algeria, with due care, might become the chief among the olive producing countries of the Mediterranean sea-board, for the soil is in many parts admirably suited to the plant. The future prosperity of Algeria, however, does not now

concern us. The land is a marvellous land in many, many ways, endowed and blessed with some of the most priceless treasures of the world; it offers an ever-widening field for the employment of a nation's wealth, and the enterprise and well-being of a nation's sons; and it is a heritage of which France may well be proud.

But I have digressed beyond all reasonable limits.

After ten days of bad weather, the wind at last changed, and on the 18th January we set sail for Bougie, distant rather more than a hundred miles. The sea was running very high off Cape Matifou, and as we tore through the water at ten knots the great green waves showed clear above the head of the man at the wheel. By midnight we were under the cliffs of Cape Carbon at the entrance to Bougie Bay, and an hour later had dropped anchor before the town. Nowhere, I suppose, in Algeria can finer scenery be found than in the neighbourhood of Bougie, and if nature has lavished some of her choicest gifts upon the country she has reserved the prize for Bougie Bay.

Just before leaving Algiers, a yacht, whose name is known in all quarters of the globe, arrived in the harbour. We shortly exchanged visits; and on hearing that we were going to Bougie, the authoress, who will be for ever associated with the yacht in question said to me: "I have seen many beautiful places in my travels over the world, but I have never seen anything finer than Bougie Bay." "Such is the grandeur of the surrounding mountain scenery," wrote Campbell the Scotch poet, half a century ago, "that I drop my pen

in despair of giving you any conception of it"; and certainly when we came on deck on the morning of our arrival in the bay, the truth of these remarks made itself felt at once.

The little town of Bougie stands at the foot of Mount Goureya, a rocky promontory not unlike Gibraltar though much higher. This promontory forms the northern side of the bay. To the southward a grand range of hills, whose slopes are clothed in heather, bracken, oleander, laurustinus, smilax, lentisk, and wild olive, rises abruptly out of the sea; and behind the hills, and so close as to appear as if they were a portion of the same range, snowy mountains, clad with pinsapos and cedars, tower peak above peak till they are capped by the clouds which hang about their glittering summits. The east is open to the Mediterranean, but to the westward there is a fertile undulating plain through which wanders a broad and rushing river—the river Oued-bou-Messaout. The ground is here carpeted with rich turf, flecked with innumerable wild flowers, and shaded by giant olive trees, while on all sides the spurs of great mountains dip down into the plain.

Such, in outline, is the Bay of Bougie, but where Campbell has hesitated to fill in the colour, we may well hold back, for no words could give an idea of its beauty. Yet Bougie is seldom visited, and the little town remains quiet and secluded, a jumble of old Roman walls and Saracenic arches, showing the foot-prints of many nations, and an unbroken history of two thousand years.

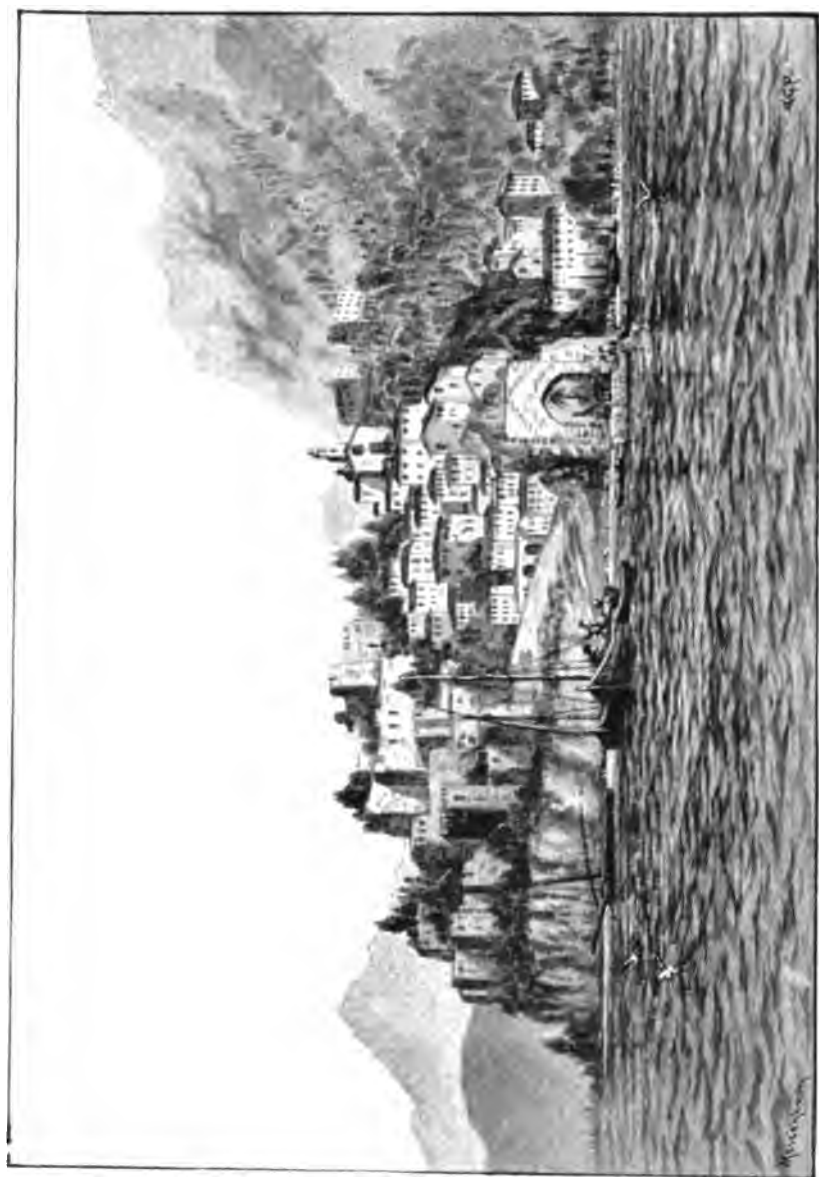
That Bougie will remain hidden much longer is

scarcely probable. The French have laid out large sums of money in drainage and road-making ; the land is being rapidly reclaimed ; the soil will grow anything, and pasturage is plentiful ; and since these lines were first penned, Bougie has been connected with the chief towns by a line of rails. In a few years, no doubt, modern enterprise will have stepped in and knocked down the old walls ; the shrieking locomotive is only the forerunner of the capitalist and the speculator ; and within a decade, quiet and secluded Bougie will have passed away, and an "improved" Bougie have sup-
planted it.

In the accompanying illustration I have endeavoured to give the reader an idea of the town of Bougie. At one time it was surrounded by fortifications, and indeed even now the place appears to be mainly composed of loopholed walls and flanking towers. The advantages of its position attracted attention at all times, and thus it has passed from one nation to another, and its history is a record of battles and sieges innumerable. The inhabitants were generally addicted to piracy, but it remained for the Corsairs to turn Bougie into a nest of murderers. Screened from the sea, and safe within the walls which Romans, Saracens, and Spaniards, had thrown round the place, they carried on their infamous piratical raids with little fear of interruption. The summit of the Goureya, 2,200 feet high, gave them an excellent look-out station, and a detachment always kept watch there for vessels lying becalmed off the coast.

As soon as any likely-looking craft was sighted, signal

BOUGIE.



was at once made to the town below ; boats were then manned, and darting out from behind Cape Carbon, a ferocious onslaught was commenced on the ill-fated craft. Acting on the principle that dead men tell no tales, the crew of the vessel attacked were murdered and thrown overboard ; and this done, the prize was towed into Bougie, the booty parcelled out, and the vessel broken up and destroyed.

Algiers in those days was in the hands of a villainous band of soldiery recruited from the scum of the Levantine ports. They numbered probably about 15,000 men, and were under little or no control. The ruling Dey was a mere puppet, and in the event of his displeasing them in any way, he was at once replaced by a myrmidon from the ranks. The Corsairs, who were, in reality, a kind of separate Republic, had nothing to fear from such a collection of scoundrels ; and as long as they took care to send a portion of their booty to those in power at Algiers they were not molested. But an end was put to this state of affairs at last, and in 1816 the Corsairs received signal chastisement at the hands of Lord Exmouth.

One morning at Bougie we noticed large numbers of wild fowl in the bay, so getting out the launch, we took our Berthon boat in tow, and steamed over to the opposite coast. As we opened the sea, we experienced a heavy swell, and it was evident that those going ashore in the Berthon must expect a ducking. C—— and the captain determined, however, to try it, and having lashed the guns to the thwarts, in case the boat was capsized,

shoved off. They were all right till they entered the surf, when the crank little craft very soon turned over and shot its occupants into the water. We watched them picking up the pieces and carrying their boat up the beach, and then we left them till the evening.

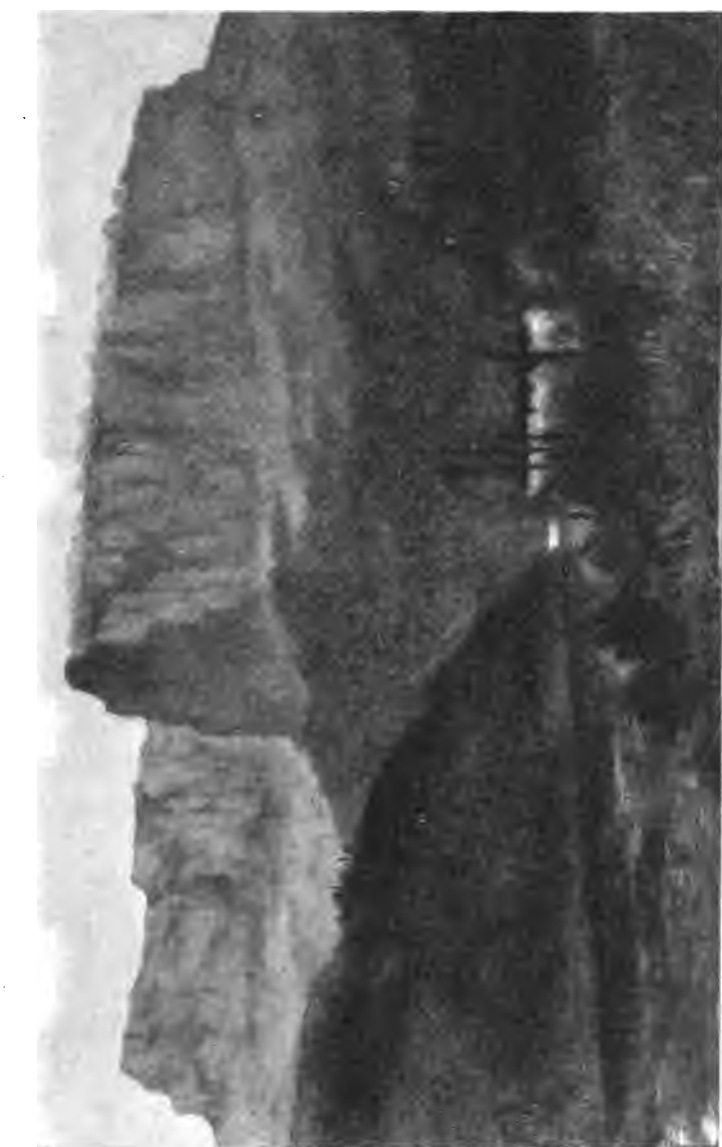
The day's sport was not very successful, and though plenty of duck and snipe were seen, it came on to rain so heavily that all fun was spoilt. There is no doubt that capital sport could be had in the neighbourhood, especially in the marshy parts of the plain, and woodcock and quail are plentiful in the hills at certain seasons of the year.

Late in the evening of a lovely day we sailed slowly out of Bougie bay for Philippeville. The moon was shining brightly, the wind was fair, and as we set every available sail we were rocked by a gentle swell coming in from the westward, and rolling onward towards the coast, where the cliffs stood up black in their sombre shadows, and the sea was aglint with sparkling light.

The next morning we created quite a stir in the excellent harbour of Philippeville, by running in under full sail and bringing the yacht up short by the anchor when we were within a few yards of an Italian merchantman.

There is nothing to detain the traveller here, for the town is very new and very ugly; but a drive along the coast to the old port of Stora—now almost deserted—is worth undertaking.

Philippeville is, however, the port of Constantine, with which it is connected by rail, and we lost no time in



CONSTANTINE.



finding a train to take us there. The distance is only fifty-four miles, but the journey is a long one, as the line climbs the sides of mountains, rounds the most extraordinary curves, and makes an ascent of over 2,000 feet before reaching its destination.

If there are in Algeria scenes of great loveliness there are others which hold you spell-bound by reason of their grandeur and magnificence. Bougie and its surroundings have been given the first place for beauty ; but surely no city in the world can have a finer situation than Constantine. The town occupies the summit of a square, flat-topped, and isolated mass of rock standing a thousand feet above the surrounding plains. A deep and narrow gorge, along the bottom of which runs the river Rummel, cuts it off from the adjacent high land, and if the rock is likened to a peninsula left high and dry, there is also the isthmus on the western side, connecting it with the continent. The gorge, extending along two faces of the square, and being, in places, little more than 150 feet across, is spanned only by a single narrow bridge of iron poised some hundred feet above the river level. Far beneath are the remains of ancient bridges which have now fallen into ruin ; and further down into the abyss are arches of solid rock, connecting precipice with precipice, and bridging unknown caves and caverns where the Rummel disappears from view to flow on in darkness.

It was on this side and by the old bridge of El Kantara, that the French advanced upon the place, but their army was beaten back with fearful loss, and when the

remnants of it reached Bona, the force which had set out with so much confidence was little better than a wreck. A year elapsed before the attack was renewed. Then again were the French troops hurled against this mighty fortress, and Constantine fell. Many of the inhabitants, in their eagerness to escape, lowered themselves over the sides of the precipices. To their minds defeat meant death and wholesale butchery, and they preferred to launch themselves into the abyss and hang suspended by a single cord, than trust to the mercy of the conqueror. How many were dashed to atoms in this way will never be known, but eye-witnesses have related how, in their terror, women jumped from those giddy heights with their children in their arms. It is a horrible picture, but not so horrible as the reality.

The greater part of Constantine now is modern and French; but here, as in all Eastern cities, one may find quarters where the habits and mode of life of the people are the same to day as they were many hundred years ago. There are interesting scenes, such as the tanners' quarter, situated at the extreme edge of the eastern cliff, and there are buildings, such as the palace of El Hadj Ahmed, which can be scarcely equalled for colour and decoration; but the real attraction of Constantine lies ever in its situation.

The history of the place is full of romance, and its streets have known the tread of Scipio Africanus, of Jugurtha, of Metellus, and of Marius; but the volumes remain unopen while we gaze in wonder at the mighty rock.

There is one point, and one especially, where you may gain some idea of the majesty of Constantine. Stand at the falls of the Rummel, watch the river flowing out from the black darkness of those unknown caves and threading its way between precipitous cliffs spanned two hundred feet above by natural arches of solid rock ; watch it again falling with a roar to a lower level and filling the air with its spray, and then see it winding away over the thirsty land amidst cypresses and olives, poplars and plane trees. Mighty cliffs overhang you on either hand, one side in shade, the other, half in sunlight ; vultures are poised in mid-air looking mere specks against the rocks ; the sun beats down upon you ; the roar of rushing water is in your ears ; your cheek is fanned by cold spray ; and then as you look up and up, and higher still, there hangs Belad el Hao wa, the City of the Air, the ancient Cirta, the modern Constantine. Is this any common sight ? No, there can be no city like Constantine.

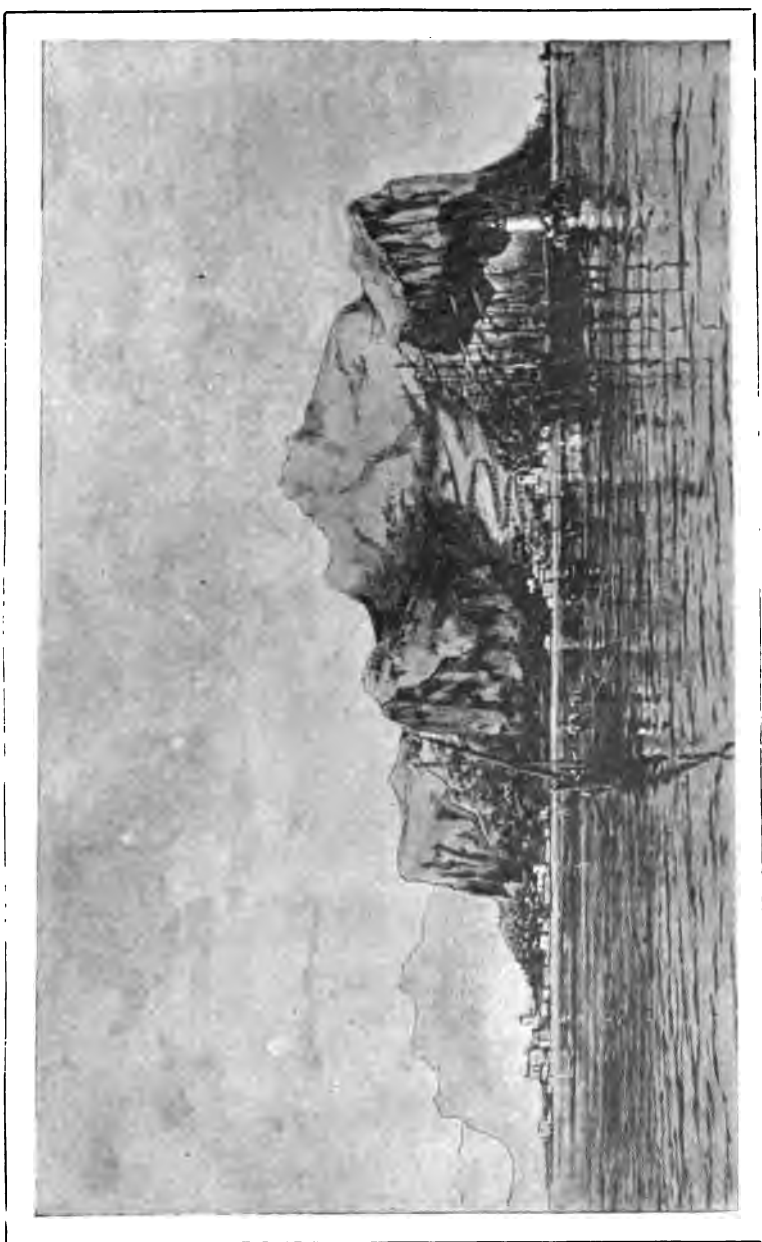


CHAPTER III.

SICILY.

EARLY in the morning of the 25th of January we weighed anchor and left Philippeville. The wind was fair and off the land, and with jib-topsail and maintopmast-staysail drawing well, *Ptarmigan* was very soon spanking along on her way to Palermo at ten knots. That evening we were off Bona, and the next morning the Cani rocks were within sight.

No sea is more fickle than the Mediterranean, and as the barometer is of little assistance in forecasting the weather, it is necessary to be always on one's guard. A change of wind is often very sudden, and thus without any warning, and with the glass still standing high, we found it coming on to blow heavily. All hands were very soon at work taking in the light canvas, and in less than half an hour we were rushing through the water at twelve knots, with a double reef in the mainsail and one in the fore. We held the wind well till midnight, when we were under the land of Sicily, and when morning broke Palermo bay lay before us.



MONTI PELLEGRINO.

From no point of view does Palermo appear to greater advantage than from the sea. The scenery of its bay is almost unrivalled. On the right Monte Pellegrino stands up in massive grandeur, and eight miles away, across waters of the colour of *lapis lazuli*, Catelfano guards the eastern entrance. The town fringes the shore in the centre of the bay, spreading eastward till it nears the village of Bagheria, and in the background an amphitheatre of hills and mountains encloses the Concha d'Oro, the Golden Shell, the wide expanse of fertile garden where orange and olive trees grow in hundreds of thousands, and where the ground is at all times carpeted with an endless succession of flowers.

It fell a flat calm when we were about three miles from the harbour, and night had closed in ere we had taken up our berth. Having thus much time at our disposal, and being within sight of the place we wished to visit, we made complete plans for the following day, which were, however, destined to be frustrated. Our papers had been left at the Port Office as soon as we arrived, but as it was after sunset we could not obtain pratique that evening. The next morning we were awakened early by the Doctor of the Port coming alongside to inspect us, and as soon as he had made a tour of the vessel he said, "You may haul down your yellow flag." He was a pleasant-mannered man, short, dark, and clever-looking; and after an exchange of compliments we bowed him over the side, thinking we had seen the last of him.

Hardly, however, had the Doctor disappeared when

another boat arrived containing an officer from the Port Office. This worthy kept at boat's length from the yacht as though he feared to come near us, and seeing our yellow flag coming down, he began gesticulating in a frantic manner, and crying out—

“You can't have pratique; you come from Philippeville; you must perform seven days' quarantine!”

It was useless for us to argue that the Doctor had inspected us and that we were all in good health. The only answer that we got was that the Doctor knew nothing; that a guard would be put on board at once; and that if we objected we could leave the harbour.

The prospect was not a pleasant one. We were moored in a corner of the harbour where the high breakwater wall shut out all the view. On either side of us were anchored sailing vessels, of from 600 tons and upwards, so we could see nothing; in front of us the outlook was also obstructed: consequently, if we wanted to see at all, there was no alternative but to go aloft.

These somewhat depressing circumstances were not, however, to rest here; for while we were talking over what was best to be done, the saloon door opened and the Doctor reappeared.

“Owing to my having been in contact with you,” said this gentleman, with a shrug of the shoulders, “I have to perform seven days' quarantine on board!”

“This is nice news,” we replied, “but where are your clothes, and where are you going to sleep? Every cabin is full and we can't put you up.”

"Oh," replied the Doctor, "that is of no consequence. As for clothes, here is my great coat, and, for sleeping accommodation, what could one want better than this exceedingly comfortable saloon sofa?"

Saying which, he threw his coat on the said sofa, and prepared to make himself at home.

I must explain that the Doctor's knowledge of languages was confined to his own native tongue, though he was very voluble about one of his sons, then in England, who could speak English exceedingly well. Our knowledge of Italian was, on the other hand, excessively limited, so that the prospect of conversation with our enforced guest was remote. The idea of a man, not even possessed of a change of linen, occupying our saloon as a bed-room was, moreover, not pleasant, and in despair at the prospect, we sent off a strong letter to the British Consul, pointing out how we were likely to suffer from the Doctor's stupidity in coming on board, and mildly suggesting that he should be removed to durance vile elsewhere.

Meanwhile we made the best of a bad job and amused ourselves, vocabulary in hand, talking to the Doctor.

We very soon discovered that the cholera was his one subject. He had been through seven epidemics of cholera and had written twenty-one pamphlets on the same, and having ensconced himself in a chair, he produced several of these pamphlets, and, by way of making up for our want of knowledge of the language, began to read extracts from them in the loudest possible voice. To escape was difficult, seeing that rain was

descending in torrents on deck, but, fortunately, the Doctor's lecture was interrupted by his wife, who, in the greatest agitation, appeared on the wharf to ask where we were going to take her husband.

Here was a chance! We replied that we were probably sailing the following morning for London. This produced much wringing of hands on the part of the lady on the wharf, but not so on the part of the lady's husband. He was not the least put out. The voyage, he said, would be a voyage of pleasure, and on arriving in London he would have the felicity of seeing his son!

But happily an end was eventually put to our troubles, and, late in the afternoon, a boat came alongside and removed the Doctor to an uninhabited house at the end of the wharf, where he spent the night alone. The next day a telegram arrived from Rome, saying quarantine was removed, and, much to our delight, we found ourselves at liberty.

To those who love Nature for herself, and to whom the lights and shades falling over a landscape are constant and never-ending pleasures, Palermo will appear to be one of the most beautiful spots in the world. There is something so exquisite in the colouring, and so delicately refined in the outline of the mountains, that the place fixes itself in the memory, and the mere mention of its name is sufficient to bring back to the mind recollections of a brilliant atmosphere in which all life seemed bright and joyous in sunshine—recollections of violet and purple mountains, of miles of

emerald orange trees, laden with golden fruit and scenting the air, and of the deep yellow-coloured walls of a great town.

But if from Nature we turn to what has been achieved by the hand of man, here are jewels of priceless worth.

Palermo possesses one gem before which all others pale. Grander and more striking works are to be found in many parts of Europe—in Spain, in France, in Italy—but surely few, if any, can vie in beauty with the chapel in the Palazzo Reale, founded by King Roger—*Dux strenuus et primus rex Siciliae*. The Cappella Palatina, completed more than seven hundred years ago, still remains perfect in its unrivalled beauty; the decorations, which cover every inch of surface, glisten as of old, and time has not marred, but mellowed, the gorgeous colouring of its walls. Here, concentrated into one small building, the whole Bible story, “from the dove that brooded over chaos to the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul,” is displayed in a succession of Arabo-Byzantine mosaics. Nothing is lost in effect by the size of the chapel, but rather is the completeness and exquisite finish of the whole more easily grasped by reason of its limits. From end to end it is scarcely more than one hundred feet in length, while the cupola that surmounts the intersection of three apsidal transepts is less than sixty feet above the marble floor.

Everywhere—in the two aisles, the nave, the transepts, the cupola, and even on the floor—is colour and ornamentation; gold and green, scarlet and blue, crim-

son and purple, all blended together by the workers of the twelfth century, and toned down into a surpassing richness by the hand of time.

The groundwork of the whole is gold ; mouldings to arches and windows there are none, and thus the walls are overlaid without a break. Small windows, set deep within the walls and placed high up near the roof, admit a sufficiency of light to illuminate the lustrous surface without dazzling the eye. Silver lamps hang from the roof and from the arches, and the floor is enriched with curious patterns, in all varieties of colour, on a ground of marble, of porphyry, and of serpentine.

Such is the Cappella Palatina, and such the handiwork of those who came from Byzantium, from Italy, and from Normandy to help the Saracens working under the Norman King.

But let us turn elsewhere.

Far grander than the Cappella Palatina is the Cathedral of Monreale, founded by William the Good some twenty years after the death of King Roger. More striking, no doubt, is this great building by reason of its size, but not more complete or more perfect in its loveliness. In the chapel, all that is beautiful in the translucent surface of mosaic, all that colour and design in decoration can achieve, is focussed into one small shrine, but in the cathedral the very vastness of the building causes the eye to wander abroad, and a sense of bewilderment is at first experienced at the multitude of subjects presented to the gaze. For here, again,

the architecture of the interior is subordinate to the decoration; here, again, in mosaic, the Bible story is depicted upon a dusky ground of gold. Everywhere, save on the granite pillars that support the roof, is colour and ornamentation, grand in its simplicity, perfect in its execution, glowing and lustrous for all time, and overruled by the mighty figure which occupies the whole ceiling of the eastern apse.

The exterior bears the trace of many hands, Byzantine, Saracen, and above all, Norman. Hard by, a Benedictine monastery, whose cloisters almost join the fane, has sprung up, and flourished, and fallen into decay since William the Good was laid to rest within the cathedral, but the centre of interest at Monreale still stands up resplendent within and without; the Concha d'Oro lies as one great garden at its feet; around is the dust and squalor of a straggling village; and far away, across a green sea of orange trees, are the golden walls of Palermo.

And the walls of Palermo are golden, rich in deep yellow-coloured stone, and glowing always in the warm sunshine of the south. Nowhere is this more noticeable than at the Cathedral. The exterior of this building is entirely of stone of this colour, thrown into an even deeper shade by contrast with the white marble statues of the adjoining piazza. The walls are everywhere encrusted with decoration, and here, too, is a wonderful admixture of styles, Saracenic, Greek, Arabic, Norman, and Gothic, have each a place, and all help in producing a building wanting, perhaps, in dignity and

massive grandeur, but "more richly ornamental," says Fergusson, "with intersecting arches and mosaic decorations externally than almost any other church of its class."*

In the interior, decoration and ornament has for the most part disappeared; colour even of stonework is almost wholly wanting, and whitewash reigns supreme in all its baldness. Coming from Monreale and the Cappella Palatina, the contrast of this interior is so marked that one is almost glad to escape from it, yet there is a chapel within its walls at which one may well pause, for here sleeps King Roger, his daughter, Henry VI., Frederick II., and the Princess Constance of Aragon. No one could have referred to this chapel, and all that it contains with more perfect grace than Addington Symonds. "Very sombre and stately," he writes, "are these porphyry resting-places of princes born in the purple, assembled here from lands so distant, from the craggy heights of Hohenstauffen, from the green orchards of Cotentin, from the dry hills of Aragon. They sleep, and the centuries pass by. Rude hands break open the granite lids of their sepulchres, to find tresses of yellow hair and fragments of imperial mantles, embroidered with the hawks and stags the royal hunter loved. The church in which they lie changes with the change of taste in architecture and the manners of successive ages. But the huge stone arks remain unmoved guarding their freight of mouldering dust beneath gloomy canopies of

* *Handbook of Architecture*, vol. ii.

stone, that temper the sunlight as it streams from the chapel windows.*

Our spell ashore was over, and in the afternoon of the 1st February we were again afloat, passing slowly out of harbour under the shadow of Monte Pellegrino.

A heavy roll was coming in from the north-west with only a light breeze, and this dropped to a dead calm before nightfall. The next morning we were off Cape Faro, drifting with the currents of Charybdis stern on towards the Calabrian coast. However, enough wind rose with the sun to take us into Messina, where we dropped anchor shortly after breakfast. The harbour, which is nearly four miles in circumference, was looking its best. The previous day had been wet, but the sky was now cloudless; every vessel was taking advantage of the sun to dry canvas, and sails of all sizes, shapes, and colours, were hanging loosely from spars and yards. The sea reflected the dazzling brilliancy of the shipping, the town, and the adjoining landscape; and the coasts of Calabria, in that peculiar clearness of atmosphere that so often follows rain, seemed to abut on to the harbour.

Of Messina I have little to tell without going into the realms of history; for though the greater part of Messina in these days is modern, it has a history dating back upwards of nine hundred years before the foundation of Rome. At all times it has been the coveted prize of nations, and from the day when it was first founded by pirates from Cumæ, to a date two thousand

* *Sketches in Italy and Greece.*

years later, when the Saracens were driven out of it by King Roger, rival after rival strove for its possession. In more modern times too it has been the scene of bloodshed, and Spain and France have fought over it. But arms alone could not entirely destroy a place till much later days than these, and it was left for the forces of nature to complete the ruin.

In 1780, Messina was the centre of a terrible earthquake disturbance which caused its buildings to rock for six whole months, and brought many of its finest palaces and churches to the ground. Shortly before this, full half its population had been carried off by a visitation of the plague, while hardly had the heaving of the earth subsided, when the sea suddenly rose and burst in shore, flooding the streets to a great depth, beating against the houses, and undermining and washing away many of those buildings which had previously escaped.

No wonder, then, that the inhabitants were granted an immunity from taxation for twenty-five years, as a set off against the sufferings and losses they had sustained, for hardly could the history of any people have been darker. A time of persecution was, however, still in store for them, and not until they had survived the cruel tyranny and bitter oppression of King Bomba did the season of their deliverance at length arrive at the hands of Garibaldi. Messina, after centuries of misfortune, now thrives as a great trade centre, and the sun of its prosperity seems to have risen at last.

Every traveller who has found himself at Messina, with time at his disposal, has made a journey to Taormina. It is a simple matter; an hour by train, and an hour's drive up the mountain-side from Giardini, will take him to the most beautiful spot in Sicily.

Here, on a projecting and somewhat isolated angle of rock which may be said to overhang the sea, the ruins of a Greek theatre occupy a site which is unsurpassed by that of any similar building in the world. Bearing the trace of Roman as well as Greek hands, and hollowed for the most part out of the solid rock, the remains of this ancient theatre face Etna, and command not one view only, but a perfect series of unequalled and unsurpassed pictures, each one vying with the other in beauty, and each associated with numberless events in history and in story. "Nothing can surpass Taormina," writes Knight in his *Normans in Sicily*; nothing, surely, does surpass it. But there is one view to be obtained from Taormina which has never failed to impress those who have seen it through all ages—the view of Etna from the ruins of the Greek theatre.

Standing above the higher row of seats and facing the proscenium, a panorama of entrancing beauty is spread out before one. The landscape possesses a certain weird appearance, and the rugged hills, rich in their vines and their olives, seem to cower beneath the mighty king whose head towers above them clothed in snow and crowned with a fiery crater.

The beauties of every landscape are determined by certain given effects of light and shade, and being there-

fore dependent on sun and conditions of atmosphere, these beauties are often transient. The same landscape may be beautiful under a variety of conditions of weather and time of day, but there is always one condition, pre-eminently, when it looks its best. Perfect beauty—loveliness in nature which touches the ideal—is fleeting and soon passes away, and it is this uncertainty of duration which causes us to drink it in while it lasts and which makes us strive to recollect it afterwards. Is this not, for instance, the case with sunset effects? It is not merely the loveliness and diversity of colouring flushing the sky that charms us, it is not solely the tossed clouds of crimson in the higher heavens, or the bars of violet and green and gold on the horizon; it is the fleeting nature of the effect, it is the certain knowledge that it will last a few moments and be gone which makes us stand in silence and watch it, and it is the certainty, moreover, that the sense of it will be as evanescent as the reality, and that we shall be no more able to carry away a distinct recollection of it than we are, through a merciful Providence, to retain any memories of pain and suffering.

The day had been one ceaseless downpour of rain, but late in the afternoon the black clouds which had been hanging overhead all day were suddenly swept away, and in a moment Etna stood out clear and sharp against the evening sky. Immediately beneath lay Taormina on its ledge of rock, and a valley filled with olives and golden-leaved lemons; a thousand feet lower, the village of Giardini fringed the shore of a tideless and glassy

sea; and on the right were the wild and rocky mountains of the coast-line, tossed and contorted into every conceivable form by the convulsions of the earth's crust. The middle distance was occupied by an endless succession of hills, some wooded and others rugged, which overlapped each other and rolled down in undulating curves towards the shore. High in the sky, and beyond these, Etna reared his great head, and in the far distance more mountains, and the headland of Syracuse, appeared in shadowy outline.

By degrees the sun sank slowly down behind the great mountain; the mists rose up out of the valleys and bathed the whole landscape in an infinite variety of cold tints—of greys, of blues, of violets. Then the sound of many church bells, some near, some far, ascended from the valleys, ringing out the day in mellow tones. The sea reflected the brightness of the sky, and threw up more distinctly the bays and headlands of the coast, and in peace and quietude the day sank slowly to rest. Etna stood out clearly to the last, but by degrees he too was capped again with clouds and shrouded in mists, and in a few moments more the whole of this lovely picture had faded into the gloom and darkness of coming night.

Such is the moment to catch a sight of Etna in his most impressive grandeur: Etna frowning there in the sky as a god in his wrath; rumbling ever and anon with strange sounds deep down in the bowels of the earth; ready any moment to belch forth fire, to lave his giant shoulders in molten rock, and to devour and blot out

any vegetation which has dared to approach within his limits. A terrible and awful presence, emitting sulphurous smoke in the bright sunshine of summer days, and a ruddy glow throughout the dark hours of long winter nights ; a presence that never rests, almost appalling in its lonely majesty, standing there wrapped in storm, in snow, in flame, and fire, yet always unchanged—unchanged throughout the countless ages of the past, unchanged throughout the short span of present centuries, unchangeable, surely, for all time, through all eternity.

In the afternoon of the 4th February we left Messina, making a sweep round the sickle-shaped harbour under full sail to get out. Dark, angry-looking clouds were hanging over the shores of Sicily, clothing the lower slopes of the hills, and effectually blotting out the higher mountains. Now and then large masses of these clouds broke away from the rest, and floated quietly over to Calabria, where they changed from black to red in the rays of the setting sun. The sea turned from blue to darkest green, and a heavy, sullen swell caused the yacht to roll, while there was scarcely wind enough to steady her.

It is impossible to go to sea and experience nothing but calms and fair winds ; storms must take their turn with the fine weather, and those who expect to find in the Mediterranean an endless succession of sunny seas will be most grievously disappointed. After many years experience I, like others, have learnt, that in certain parts of the Mediterranean one may encounter



ETNA

as strong a wind and as nasty a sea as anyone who is fond of a storm can desire.

Cape de Gata and Cape Matapan are points known to most sailors for badness of weather, but there is one part which excels the rest, and this is the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Taranto and the Straits of Otranto. Being bound for Corfu, we should necessarily have to pass through this region of storms, and as it happened we were destined to encounter the full force of one of those gales, known locally as "a Bora," before reaching our destination.

Two days after leaving Messina the morning broke with a threatening sky. The wind was all round the compass, as sailors call it, and our sails were flapping from side to side. By degrees the sky became quite black, and we could see that evil was brewing by the white squalls on the horizon ; still, not a breath of wind reached us.

"Down main sail !" shouted the Captain, and none too soon, for the next instant we were struck by a heavy squall and laid completely on our beam ends. The air was filled with spray like dense white smoke swirling about ; hail descended in blocks of solid ice as big as plums, rattling on the deck like stones, and giving ugly knocks wherever they struck. The vessel was under two reefed foresail and standing jib at the moment, and though every effort was made to take sail off her it was too late. The starboard bulwarks, forward, were under water, as was also the foresail boom and lower part of the sail ; the cutter, with oars, blocks, falls, and guys was carried away, together with the after davit ; three

planks of the bulwarks followed suit ; the forward davit was bent up like wire, starting the main rail for fifteen feet or more, and the foresail split. Then we righted, and in another second were racing along before the wind under a single head-sail. It was fortunate the mainsail was down in time, otherwise the general impression was that the yacht would have been lost or her masts been blown out of her. The damage we had received was thus slight in comparison to what might have happened, and beyond one man being knocked down and two wounded by hailstones, and the mate being nearly washed overboard in trying to cut away the wreck of the cutter, we were all safe and had time to turn our attention to the gale.

A thunderstorm of considerable violence now broke over us ; lightning played round the ship ; and more hail fell, some of the larger stones measuring two inches in diameter. Those on deck, profiting by previous experience, armed themselves with the basket deck-chairs, and with these extemporised umbrellas weathered this second hailstorm without damage.

All day it continued to blow with increasing force, and the sea ran very high. We were necessarily completely off our course, and for fear of approaching too near the coast we determined to heave to. A most disagreeable night followed, spent in riding out the gale under fore trysail, and being a good deal knocked about. Every now and then we got a heavy sea on board, but beyond having a skylight carried away, no further damage was done, and at four o'clock in the morning

the gale had so far moderated that we were able to set the main trysail and let draw.

At noon the next day we found we were forty miles S. of Corfu, and sixty N.W. of Cephalonia; and after a quieter night, in smooth water, we at length dropped anchor in Corfu Roads at eight o'clock in the morning of the 8th February.



CHAPTER IV.

CORFU AND ALBANIA.

WE found Corfu filled with troops, and all day long parades were being held on the Esplanade, for Greece had apparently made up her mind to go to war with Turkey. The troops in Corfu numbered from fifteen hundred to two thousand men, most of whom were recruits, and during the month I had the opportunity of watching them they certainly progressed very rapidly with their drill. The officers were, as a rule, well turned out, but the equipment of the men was bad. One naturally expected to find the recruits somewhat variously clad, but when these parti-coloured soldiers were drafted into the battalion, the effect was somewhat curious.

The majority of the men had either a blue shell-jacket or a long blue great-coat, but those who had not as yet become possessed of light grey trousers were dressed in nether garments of every variety, from the white stocking-gaiter of the Albanian to the brown fashionable check of the man of the town. The proper head-dress



was a blue kepi, but straw hats, large and small, and fez caps were frequently to be seen in the ranks. The worst things in their kit, from a soldier's point of view, were their boots, for these were of all varieties, thin and thick, pointed-toed and high-heeled; the consequence being that owing to the endless parades and route marches the men were, in very many instances, lame.

As to their drill, the double company system had been adopted; but while many of the parade movements were well done, their route marching was bad, the rear of the column being often kept at a run. In point of physique the men were for the most part poor, and to meet a fine well-set-up man was a rare exception.

There seemed very little *esprit* about the whole movement, and I was much amused, when watching the troops at drill one day, to hear my next-door neighbour exclaim: "I wish they would fight and get a good licking, and then there would be an end to all this folly." I concluded from this remark that the gentleman in question was not a patriot, but I found afterwards that the farther one went from the capital the less pronounced was the war fever, and that in many parts of Greece the inhabitants were heartily tired of a policy which caused taxation to rise, and at the same time paralysed trade and destroyed credit. A banker with whom I became acquainted, told me that at this time Greece was spending half-a-million francs a day on her army and that she had 75,000 men under arms. All men under twenty-seven years of age had been called

out, and the usual annual calls, in July and December, of men of twenty-one years had also been made. He sent for one of his clerks who had been taken for service, and made him answer sundry questions. The man, a private, said his pay was a franc a day, and that after deducting stoppages for messing and clothing he had left a little less than two pence a day with which to find himself in coffee in the morning, and other necessities. His ration generally consisted of bread and cheese at 10 A.M., and soup, made of meat and vegetables, at 5 P.M. Each man was entitled to a complete suit of uniform, together with a great-coat, a cap, and a pair of boots, but these last were scarce.

The condition of the troops at Corfu was thus by no means first rate ; but there were many places where their condition was much worse, and a general state of unpreparedness for active operations appeared to exist.

I have already said that the war fever was by no means general ; and in many parts of the Morea the poorer classes were complaining of the taxes and the dearness of food. To a stranger it seemed as if the majority of the population were against war, and in the agricultural districts, where the complaints were loudest, the farmers and landowners were unable to find labour owing to their regular men being taken for the army.

In one town a deplorable tale was told me of the condition of the troops, my informant stating that when the men were first taken, many of them had only their summer clothes, and in this condition, and being insufficiently protected from the weather, they were shipped

off to various centres. Dysentery and fever consequently soon broke out among them, and their food being meagre, great numbers of them died. The recruits in nearly every case were ill clad, and in the town to which I refer, many of them had no uniform beyond a great-coat, though they had been waiting three months for their outfit.

In another town my interpreter had a relation who was adjutant of one of the regiments of the garrison; and consequently I very soon made acquaintance with this officer, whom I found most civil and obliging. He invited me to come round the barracks, and I thus had an opportunity of looking more closely at the men. Their physique was not striking, and many of them were weakly-looking and ill grown. The rooms were the reverse of clean, and I saw neither bed-cots, forms, nor tables in any of them. The men slept on the floor, and were provided with two blankets each. The account of the food differed here from what had been given me in other places, and the ration was as follows: $1\frac{1}{2}$ okes of bread every other day, or an allowance in English weight of about 2 lbs. per man per day, 2 ozs. of meat, and a small quantity of dried fish or cheese. As I was going round the rooms the evening meal was being prepared, and on this occasion it consisted of small square lumps of white cheese.

One of the men was made to unbutton his clothes to show me what he had on. The uniform was of good material, but, of course, no fit was attempted. The men had no change of clothing, the boots again were

bad, and the arms, according to our ideas, were ill kept.

The adjutant next showed me his last-joined recruits, who, he complained, were shockingly stupid. One unlucky individual, who had just arrived, was a shepherd from the neighbourhood of Patras, clad in white woollen garments. The adjutant turned to me and said, "How is one to make soldiers out of men of this sort? Some of them do not understand a word we say to them, and others, I really believe, are idiots."

The nearer one approached to Athens the more pronounced did the belligerent attitude of the nation become. The portion of the army in and around Athens was certainly full of martial ardour, and the first answer I received to a question whether war with Turkey would not be a serious mistake, was, "I would pay the last farthing I have in the world, if only we may fight." This man was an example, then, of the true patriot, but at the same time he was not a soldier.

The regiments I saw at Athens were in some instances by no means complete in point of equipment, and though the men were a better class, and looked a little more like work, I could never shake off the idea of the skeleton in the cupboard further a-field, and those wretchedly weak and untrained recruits in the provinces.

The best class of officer in the Greek army is to be found in the Artillery and the Engineers. The infantry officer is, as often as not, promoted from the ranks, but in the Artillery and Engineers the officers are well-

born and specially trained as cadets before entering the service.

On one occasion I travelled with three Engineers, who were on their way from Athens to Arta, and as one of these was a distinguished officer who proved to have English relations, I had some conversation with him about the army. He told me the strength of the army was between seventy and eighty thousand men, and that a further call of all men of twenty-nine and thirty years of age was going to be made. He seemed perfectly indifferent about the crisis, and remarked : " We soldiers, you see, have not much to do with a question of peace or war, we are merely the tools of the politicians." He showed considerable moderation in talking of the Turks. He thought them a necessary evil in Europe, but could not believe that any nation really cared whether they were ultimately driven across the Bosphorus or not. As to their troops, he said, they were, no doubt, a fine body of men, but their officers were sadly deficient in knowledge of their profession.

Constant improvements in fire-arms may in a measure affect modern tactics, but cavalry will ever be the eyes and ears of an army in the field. The Greeks are weak in this important branch. The cavalry I saw were about on a par with our yeomanry regiments, but lacked altogether the grit of which that invaluable force is composed.

Of the artillery I saw little or nothing ; but the horses for this branch of the service, as well as for the cavalry, are of fair class. Some of them are bred in the country,

but the majority of them are imported from Algeria and Bohemia.

In travelling in this way about Greece, the general state of unpreparedness for war became more and more evident, and one began to wonder at last whether the doubts expressed by some in the earnestness of the war party were altogether without foundation. Now and then one met a man who went so far as to avow that the Government never intended to go to war, and that they were doing nothing to make the army really effective. If M. Delyannis' Ministry never intended to fight, then the agitation into which they threw the country is all the more to be condemned. Jingoism must ever be a weak trait in a government, and bluster was never known to come to a good end. Certain it is that the party threw the country into a fever; for it must be remembered that when Greece acted as though she would go to war with Turkey her whole energies were devoted to her army; everything else went by the board; the country became one vast barrack; all her manhood was called to arms; the cultivation of the soil was forgotten; and taxes rose to an unprecedented height. Mercifully, through the action of the Powers, war was averted, but had the match been laid to the train the Turks would have been over the frontier in a moment. A skirmish or two would have occurred, followed, no doubt, by a general engagement; but within a month of the commencement of hostilities the troops of the Sultan would have been at the foot of the Acropolis, the Greek army would have ceased to exist, and all the work of the

past sixty years would, at the same time, have been blotted out.

The military condition of Greece in 1886 is not immaterial at the present moment, for few can doubt that before the close of the present century the Eastern Question will have assumed a fresh aspect, and Greece be again in arms. To travel through Greece, Macedonia, Turkey, and Bulgaria is to be convinced that within the next few years the map of Europe in that quarter will have to be re-drawn ; but speculation upon who the future votaries at the finest of all Eastern churches may be, or the time that may possibly elapse before the crescent is finally supplanted by the cross on Sta. Sophia, can find no place in these pages. Greece has many friends and admirers, and when, by a calm and dignified policy—such a policy as she is now pursuing under the enlightened leadership of M. Tricoupis—she shows herself capable of controlling a more extended territory, then she may be within a measurable distance of her aspirations, and a position in Europe more in accord with her former greatness be almost within her grasp.

It is time we returned to Corfu.

Englishmen are fond of pluming themselves upon the advantages accruing to the inhabitants of their foreign possessions by the enlightened policy of their rule, and none can deny that in many instances there is full foundation for both pride and satisfaction. Communities that have enjoyed the protection of the British flag, even for a season, have often had cause to congratulate

themselves on their good fortune, and there are many centres now existing where, through this circumstance alone, plenty has taken the place of poverty, and freedom has followed close on the heels of oppression.

No brighter day ever dawned for the Ionian Islands than that on which they were placed exclusively under British protection. The description we have of them under various governments—the Venetian, the Septinsular, and the French—previous to 1815 is little short of deplorable: the treasury was empty; the public buildings were almost in ruins; the roads were impassable; those holding high appointments enriched themselves at the expense of their fellow-citizens; the administration of justice was ruled by bribery; crime went unpunished, and the innocent, as often as not, suffered for the guilty; religion almost ceased to exist; the Church was robbed and its funds misapplied; morality sunk to the lowest ebb; and, as a climax to all these evils, the inhabitants were periodically decimated by plague and disease. But at length the time for their emancipation arrived, and under Sir Thomas Maitland, or King Tom, as he was nicknamed, as Lord High Commissioner, the Ionian Islands were brought from a condition where all was bad and nothing good to one of prosperity, peace, and contentment. Few people have had to contend against a more overwhelming mass of hostile criticism than the First Commissioner of the Ionian Islands. He was attacked in the most scurrilous manner even by his own countrymen, and accused of tyranny, injustice, and favouritism. But his able work in a short while began

to tell, and through all those years when the horrors of a most fearful war were being enacted within sight of the Islands, and when Greek and Turk were grappling in a deadly embrace, Corfu and her sisters continued their upward course of progress in peace.

The Corfiotes were among the first to acknowledge the blessings which the British Protectorate had brought with it, and President Manzaro, speaking in the Assembly at Corfu, referred to the advantages under which they lived, in the following terms. "You can well remember," he said, "that whilst a spirit of turbulence was agitating almost the whole globe, your country remained the most secure and the most tranquil in the world; and that while war, famine, pestilence, and anarchy surrounded you on every side, you continued to enjoy the blessings of peace, the security afforded by the laws, the ease occasioned by plenty, the participation in every honest pleasure, and the blessings of freedom ensured by a Government of more moderation than any other by which you were ever governed." In speaking further, on the Government, he said: "This Government usurps nothing; it demands no loan; it imposes no capitation taxes; it forces none to buy its rotten corn; it allows no arbitrary and uncertain emoluments; it lays on no requisitions; it pays punctually the rent of houses taken for public use, and the salaries of public functionaries; it requires no gratuitous services; it does not collect vexatiously the public imposts; it repairs all the public buildings and churches; it embellishes the islands with new edifices; it makes new roads and puts in order the old ones; and

so far from being in debt, it has a surplus, after paying all expenses, of six hundred thousand dollars."

If the day was a happy one that brought the Republic of the seven islands advantages such as these, the year that saw their union with Greece finally carried out saw also the commencement of a new order of things. There were many in 1864 who hailed the union with delight, and to these the blowing up of the fortifications on Vido was merely the signal for a fresh era of prosperity under a common and national flag; but whether the change was altogether for the better is still, in the Ionian Islands, a matter of opinion.

Many of those you meet allow readily that they wish they could go back again to the days of the British protectorate. "Ah," said one, "when the English were here I had work from six o'clock in the morning till eleven o'clock at night. I was garrison watchmaker, and had no difficulty in earning £40 a month. Taxes were low in those days, but what is the case now? When the English left, I had to forsake my old trade and take to buying and selling anything I could, and I can hardly make enough now to pay my taxes. The Government taxes everything, and, let alone other things, I have to pay for three licenses, first as a watchmaker, secondly as a silversmith, and thirdly as a goldsmith."

"Taxes?" said another, "why they are always rising. You see those hives there; well, the bees are taxed, and the Government prides itself on their bringing in a considerable revenue. Of course the

country wants the money, and we must all pay, but times are not what they were. Look at our roads. When you English were here, you were always at work at them, and, what is more, laid most of them out; but what sort of condition are they in now? Why, most of them are impassable, and few have had a stone put upon them since the day you left."

The roads of a country are often an index to its prosperity, and their number, like their condition, point at once to the degree of its development. Greek roads are proverbially bad, and many parts of the country are still without any thoroughfares worthy the name. The Ionian Islands were left with an inheritance of splendid roads, but it is lamentable to see their condition now, for many are altogether impassable on wheels. Perhaps, so far as the islands are concerned, the roads are best in Corfu, and worst in Zante, but however this may be, one cannot help feeling, as one looks back to many hours' torture on bad roads and tracks in various parts of Greece, how much might have been done with the money which was spent in 1885-6 in pursuit of a policy as suicidal as it was short-sighted. The mis-directed efforts of M. Delyannis, however well intentioned, added five and a quarter millions sterling to the indebtedness of Greece, and had one half that sum been expended in opening out the communications of the country, trade would have been permanently benefited instead of being, as it was, completely paralysed; there would have been a sure return for the capital expended, and instead of a permanent dead weight round the neck

trouble the mind. It is impossible
 Albanians without liking them. Their
 and their honest and cheerful expression
 —a type of expression, moreover, which is
 wanting in the case of their nearer neigh-
 ours at once to accept them as friends.
 They are small, lithe, and active, and be-
 lieving in the use of arms, as well as in
 winning the greatest hardships, they
 are the perfect type of the mountain shep-
 herd, and are fond of fighting, and their
 next comes them to look with content-
 ment, or, indeed, the numbers of
 their warlike achievements need to
 which has described the nation
 character more minutely than Byron
 of *Childe Harold*:

There are Albanian soldiers, yet
 no others, who show virtues so
 When it is the last hour of war
 When we will the end of war
 That they are better than of
 That they are better than of
 That they are better than of
 That they are better than of

The situation which has de-
 veloped in Albania has de-
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▲ SKETCH OF NIKOLO.—▲ ALBANIAN SHEPHERD.

of the exchequer, an outlet would have been found for the natural resources of the country.

Lying in Corfu roadstead gives one the impression that one is in a great lake completely surrounded by mountains. San Salvador, rising abruptly 3,000 feet out of the water, shuts in the northern entrance to the Straits, and the sinuosity of the coast-line to the southward makes the island look as if it were part of the mainland. Nowhere are the straits more than twelve miles across, while the entrances, both north and south, are less than five wide. But though this narrow channel, twenty miles in length, has the appearance of a lake, its waters are at times stirred into a disagreeable sea. Corfu boasts no harbour, and as the holding ground is bad, it is advisable to have both anchors down at all times. The low island of Vido gives a certain amount of shelter in rough weather, but the roadstead is open to the N.N.E., and the wind often blows very heavily from this quarter. It is thus quite possible to be most uncomfortable at Corfu, and on one occasion we rolled here in a heavy swell for two whole days. When it comes on to blow like this, it is often not easy to go ashore; and once, when we had braved the elements in the launch, and were endeavouring to regain the yacht, we not only narrowly escaped being capsized, but only reached her when the boat was half full of water, the fire nearly out, and when we ourselves were reduced to a half-drowned condition.

But ample compensation is to be found for little

drawbacks of this sort, and, after all, it is only in the winter months that there is much risk of anything of the kind. Corfu has hitherto afforded one unfailing attraction to yachtsmen, and this is the near neighbourhood of the Albanian coast. It was Albania that made Corfu such a popular quarter in former times, and many were the days' shooting enjoyed by those who had the good fortune to serve with their regiments in the island. But, unfortunately, sport in Albania is now becoming more and more difficult. The Porte has set its face against strangers visiting the country, and has even requested the British Government to use its best endeavours to dissuade Englishmen from resorting thither. The reason of this is not at once apparent, but it may possibly have its foundation in a fear of brigandage, and it was doubtless on this account that their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Edinburgh and Prince George of Wales were refused permission to shoot over the country only last year.

If brigands there are, they would, if caught, most probably prove to be Turks and not Albanians, and I cannot think there is any risk to sportsmen who, by employing the shepherds and others as beaters, bring their money into the country. Treachery is a vice wholly unknown among Albanians, and if they have once been in your pay, or even partaken of your food, you may trust them implicitly. Consequently, even when left alone in the country with Albanian attendants, and when kidnapping or violence would appear perfectly easy, the thought of either one or the other need never

trouble the mind. It is impossible to mix with Albanians without liking them. Their bright blue eyes and their honest and cheerful expression of countenance—a type of expression, moreover, which is almost wholly wanting in the case of their nearer neighbours—causes one at once to accept them as friends. In appearance they are small, lithe, and active, and being trained from infancy in the use of arms, as well as being capable of enduring the greatest hardships, they rise directly to the perfect type of the mountain shepherd. They are by nature fond of fighting, and their intense pride of race causes them to look with contempt upon Turks or Greeks, or, indeed, the members of any other nation. Their warlike achievements need no mention here, but nobody has described the salient points of their character more inimitably than Byron in a single stanza of *Childe Harold*:

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead.*

The attraction which has drawn so many sportsmen and yachtsmen to Corfu had also exerted its influence on us, and we had come provided with a whole armoury of guns, rifles, and ammunition, intent upon a month's shooting in Albania. Unfortunately the bad weather

* Canto ii., 65.



▲ SKETCH OF NIKOLO.—▲ AN ALBANIAN SHEPHERD.

experienced on our first start from England had caused considerable loss of time, and the season was now growing late for cock. But the sport of the country does not wholly depend on them, and if cock proved scarce there would still be plenty of pig, roe deer, snipe, and duck to work for.

No sooner did we arrive at Corfu, therefore, than immediate preparations were made for our departure, and after a couple of days spent in taking in stores, cleaning guns, rifles, and pistols, and loading cartridges, we left Corfu at 7 o'clock in the morning of the 10th February for the Albanian coast.

Julio —, an old friend, and well-known character, had come on board with his dogs the night before, and after a quick run across the straits we dropped anchor in the diminutive little harbour of Ftelia at 8.30 A.M.

The natural harbours on the Albanian coast are very striking; many of them are narrow winding creeks, the entrances to which are difficult enough to find in the daytime and almost impossible at night. It is advisable, therefore, to have somebody on board who can act as pilot, as the headlands along the coast are very much alike, and the leading marks into the harbours are often only a solitary fig tree, a patch of thorns on the hill-side, or a ruined watch-tower.

The little harbour of Ftelia is not more than 100 yards across in the broadest part, and while you may anchor inside in ten fathoms, the entrance is both shallow and exceedingly narrow. When once in, you might be lying in the middle of a small pond were it not that the sound

of the waves outside undceived you ; and so completely landlocked is the harbour that all view of the sea is barred. Rocky hills slope down to the water on every side, and the country has a peculiar desolate and lonely look, for neither hut nor house is to be seen in any direction. The hills are altogether wanting in beauty of outline ; they are rocky and scrub-grown, and rise one above the other like a series of giant ant-hills. Here and there a scanty pasture covers the ground, and the valleys between the hills are often blocked with a tangled jungle of dwarf oak, ash, holly, ilex, wild olive, bay, and mimosa. Trees, worthy the name, are rare on the coast, and though at one time the country was no doubt thickly wooded, a few giant pollard oaks at distant intervals are all that remain now to mark the site of former forests.

During the winter months huge flocks of sheep and goats wander over the land, picking up what sustenance they can between the rocks and the squills. Indeed squills, like cyclamen and asphodels, are among the most noticeable features of the country, and near the sea-board they cover the ground for miles like wurzels in a field, their great bulbs often exceeding a foot in diameter.

At distant intervals one may come across a group of hive-shaped huts built of rushes, reeds, and grass, and surrounded by a high hedge of thorns. These enclosures form the homesteads of the shepherds during the winter months ; but in the summer, when all vegetation along the coast is burnt up, they are no longer occupied. The

CORFU AND ALBANIA.

country is lonely and desolate-looking enough in the winter, but it is ten times more so in summer, for then it is handed over to the wolf, the wild boar, the jackal, and the roe deer, and the Albanians, with their flocks and herds, have gone to the highlands.

All arrangements had been made with the shepherds who were to act as our beaters, before we arrived at Corfu, and as one of our party was a cripple, we had brought over an English saddle and hired a donkey to carry him. The said donkey was always called "the horse," but in reality it was a nondescript animal between a mule and a donkey, his head being the largest part of him. However, all that was wanted was a sure-footed quadruped of some sort, and its breeding, like the fact of its being "rather light in the mizzen," as one of the crew described its kicking propensities, was a matter of little moment.

Our beaters numbered eight, each accompanied by his dog; and besides these, six of the crew, three of whom were armed with Martini carbines and three with pistols, came out every day. C——, the captain, Julio with his dogs, and the writer made up the party, which thus usually consisted of eighteen men and six or eight dogs.

The Albanians were, of course, fully armed, some with guns, others with pistols, and all with numerous long knives. With such a number of fire-arms there was, at times, a considerable fusillade; and when game of any sort was started, the rifles especially were at once in full play. It was thus more by good luck than good

management that nobody was killed; for I am bound to confess that, owing to the erratic nature of the firing, there were one or two narrow escapes.

Our first day at Ftelia resulted in a roe deer only, though the captain, as well as several members of the crew, had good chances at pig. Our second day was a blank, and nobody had a shot, though men and dogs worked hard. The coverts we endeavoured to beat were very large, and their deep ravines and dense undergrowth proved more than a match for us. On our way back to the yacht in the evening we were attacked by the dogs from a hutment, and though we were a large party, it was only by keeping close together and continually throwing stones that we escaped without injury. The fierceness of the dogs in Albania is proverbial; many of them are as big as full-grown St. Bernards, and while they possess the size and weight of dogs of that class, they are far more active and powerful. They are gifted with good noses and long sight, and they will track you for miles. It is, I can answer for it, a most uncomfortable sensation being discovered by a party of these dogs when one is alone at the corner of a covert. To shoot them, even in self-defence, is to run a very good risk of being shot oneself; for the injury to an Albanian would be the same whether you killed his child or his dog. Stones, should you be in a place where there are any, are your best ammunition; but should there be none, it is to be fervently hoped there may be a tree of some sort up which you may escape. But the dogs are a necessary evil in such a country, as

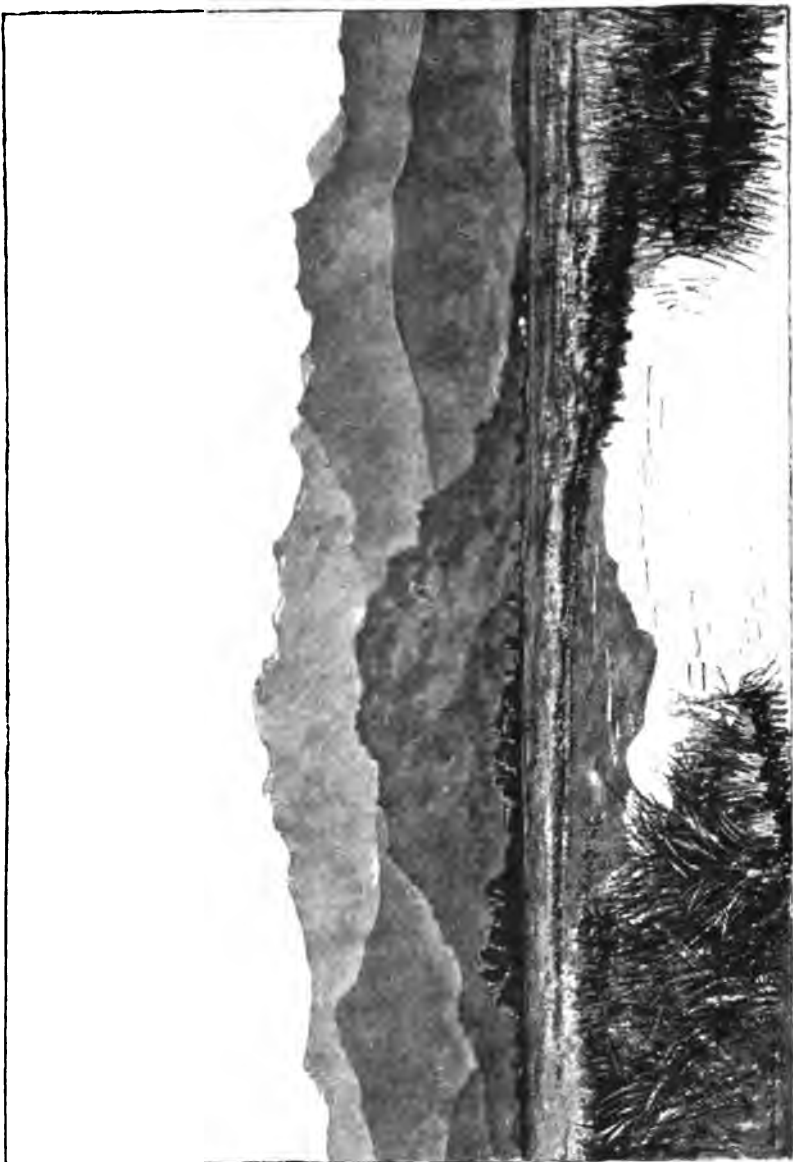
jackals and foxes abound, and the damage they do to the flocks is sometimes immense.

Game of all sorts seemed so scarce at Ftelia that we determined to march to Butrinto on the third day, sending the yacht round to meet us there. The distance is not more than seven miles, and when the crest of the high range of hills to the southward of the great plain of Butrinto is reached, the view is magnificent. Much of the plain is marshy. The broad and sluggish waters of the river Butrinto, and a lake of the same name, nine miles in length, bound it to the northward, while the hills which encircle it to the eastward are in their turn backed by the snow-clad mountains of the interior. As we descended into the plain through a rocky gorge, C—— got a shot at an eagle; and no sooner did the crack of his rifle break the stillness, than the air was at once filled with a countless number of birds of all kinds and sizes, ducks and snipe innumerable, cormorants, gulls, and grebes in thousands, herons, white cranes, flamingoes, numbers of great lazy pelicans, hawks of all sorts, eagles, buzzards, vultures, and a host of others too numerous to mention. The place seemed literally alive with birds, and had we chosen we might have had excellent snipe, duck, and woodcock shooting here. But we had determined to continue trying for pig, and so, with the exception of a day or two devoted to winged game, we paid little attention to the sport for which these shores are so famous. Moreover, the middle of February is late for cock, and they were growing less plentiful every day.

This determination on our part caused the greatest satisfaction to one of the party, for Julio had a rooted objection to sport taking any other form than pig-shooting. He accompanied us, of course, on all occasions, but on those days devoted to duck and snipe he did so with an air of passive indifference. He was too good a sportsman not to show the greatest keenness whatever the matter in hand might be, but he picked up the birds with an expression of countenance as much as to say "What fun can there be in shooting bits of things like these?"

When he was a young man, he had gone in to settle a wounded pig with his hunting knife. The pig, however, was not so badly wounded as he was thought to be, and, on Julio's approaching him, he jumped up and charged, knocking Julio over, ripping open his thigh, and injuring him so badly that it was many a long day before he could go pig-hunting again. Whether, when Julio recovered his health, he became on this account a sworn enemy of the whole race of pig, I know not, but in the pursuit of the animal he was simply indefatigable, and, early or late, had never had enough of it. A better-hearted fellow I have seldom met; always obliging and never out of temper, he was ready at all times to do anything or go anywhere, making a spare hand on deck and a ready one ashore. He remained with us several months accompanying us through many parts of Greece and Turkey, and his quaint and quiet ways as well as his conversation were always a source of amusement and pleasure to us.

HUTRINTO MARSH.



But of Julio more anon.

Part of our time at Butrinto was spent in fishing. The shallow water of Butrinto bay, as well as both the river and the lake, are famous for their mullet, the fisheries being worked in a scientific manner, and the roe of the grey mullet forming the staple of a considerable trade. We had with us a large seine net, and before leaving Corfu we had replaced the cutter, lost in the gale, by a good strong shore boat. With the help of this boat and the dinghy we were able to work the net, and some of the fish we caught proved excellent eating. Among them were some good bass and a few mullet of two pounds weight and upwards, as well as a large quantity of small fry which our cook treated as white-bait.

Of the sport ashore I have little to relate, and it seemed fated that we were not to secure a pig. C—— killed a few snipe and a duck and a woodcock or two, and made several expeditions to the shores of the lake. It was my ambition to kill a pelican, but though the mate and I worked hard in the duck punt we could never, owing to the shyness of the birds and the shallowness of the water, get nearer than 400 yards to them. Wading was out of the question on account of the muddy nature of the bottom, and so no pelican was ever brought to bag.

From Butrinto we went five miles farther up the coast to Trescolie, where, for four days, we enjoyed excellent sport. There is capital anchorage here in a small bay, protected from the north and west by the

three small islands from which the bay takes its name. On the mainland some of the best coverts for both pig and cock are not more than a quarter of a mile distant, while a walk of half a mile will take you to a marsh where snipe abound.

The coverts are largely composed of scrub-oak, and remind one very forcibly of similar woods in south Devon. Indeed waiting sometimes when the drive was a long one, it wanted no stretch of imagination to fancy oneself in an English covert. The sights and sounds were the same—the low stunted oak; the undulations of the ground; the quiet before the beginning of the beat, when nothing breaks the silence but the chasing of dead leaves, the snapping of a twig, or the falling of heavy dewdrops; the first distant shot echoing up the wood; the whistle of a pigeon's wings overhead; the fox the first thing to creep away—all were there, as though one was not many hundred miles away from the coverts of happy England, and as if the blue waters of the Mediterranean were not within a stone's throw. Even the language was often familiar as the beaters drew nearer. "Keep farther up there; more to the right Tom, we're a' working too much this way." "Keep tapping, Joe, he's safe to come back if he can," and so on. It was only when the dogs began to give tongue and the Albanians to shout "*O djera! O djera!*" which I believe to be the equivalent for "Get out, O pig," that there was anything strange in it, and for the rest many of our shooting days in Albania differed little from shooting days at home.

One morning at Trescolie, when thoughts had gone adrift in this way, I was suddenly roused by a tremendous amount of shouting and firing of guns and pistols on the part of the beaters and their friends, followed by the dogs giving tongue like a pack of hounds in full cry. For a time I could see nothing, though the uproar grew louder and louder as beaters and dogs came over the crest of a low-lying hill in front of me. But all at once, there was a crash, and a crackling of the underwood as though an elephant was coming through the covert, and for an instant I caught sight of a black object. Bang! went my gun, but the barking of the dogs and the breaking of sticks still continued, and for a moment I thought my one chance was gone. But not so; the dogs were too strong for the pig, and kept him up. If he came on he would have to cross an open glade of short green grass between me and the sea, and I still had a second barrel. Almost as this thought crossed my mind, he broke in view, going at full gallop; bang! went my gun again, followed by a noise between a growl and a grunt, there was a scuffling of the ground for an instant, and piggy lay dead. He proved to be an old boar, with a fine pair of tusks, and as the whole affair had taken place in full view of the yacht, and this was our first blood, there was much rejoicing on the part of everyone. Julio's eyes fairly sparkled with delight, and had the pig been a "man-eater" of long-standing the Albanians could scarcely have been more excited.

To follow out in detail the sport we enjoyed at Tres-

colie would be to weary the reader ; so I will merely add that after four days shooting here, when more pig were bagged, and another visit to Butrinto and Butrinto Lake, we set sail for Corfu preparatory to trying grounds elsewhere. Want of space compels me to pass over the various expeditions we made to different parts of the island ; our visits to the ruined Venetian arsenal at Govino and to the shores of Mount San Salvador ; suffice it only to say that Corfu seemed to grow daily in richness and in beauty, and the charm of its landscape and climate remained for ever fresh.

As soon as we had filled up with water and provisions we tripped anchor early in the morning of the 25th February for Pagana, another favourite shooting centre situated four miles south of Ftelia and about ten from Corfu.

The harbour here is much the same as that at Ftelia, except that the entrance is easier and the harbour itself much larger. The hills, too, which encircle it are higher, and to show how completely these natural harbours of Albania are land-locked, we never saw that Pagana was occupied by a Turkish gunboat till we rounded a corner and came right upon her. Much to the astonishment of her crew, we sailed close under her stern, and hardly had we made all snug when her captain came on board us to pay a formal call. The best shooting-ground at Pagana is to be found on the mountain known in the neighbourhood as Mellia, the coverts being distant about two hours' march. There are also good pig coverts near the villages of Muska and

Konispoulis, three miles from the harbour. The country round Pagana seemed more deserted than any we had visited, and not a soul was to be seen anywhere.

Another pig and, amongst other items, a quail, were added to the bag before we returned again, for Sunday, to Corfu. The weather had broken, and the day after we left Pagana the hills over which we had been shooting in warm sunshine were covered with snow.

For three days it rained and hailed and thundered ; a heavy swell came rolling in ; and our last days at Corfu were the reverse of comfortable. On the 3rd March we cleared out for Livitatzza, calling at Pagana on our way to take two Albanians and their dogs on board. One of these dogs was not long in distinguishing himself, for, before he had been an hour on board, he bit his master in the arm, and one of the crew in the finger. Livitatzza lies about ten miles south of Pagana, and is one of the best places for sport on the Albanian coast. The harbour, formed by a high and rocky peninsula situated at the extremity of a narrow sandy isthmus, is not easy of approach. A mud flat at the mouth of the river Kalamas, one of the principal rivers of Albania, runs out for about two miles from the land, and, being only just beneath the surface of the water, it is advisable to keep well to the southward in running in. Once inside the little bay, you are safe from all weathers, for here, as elsewhere, the water is rarely disturbed.

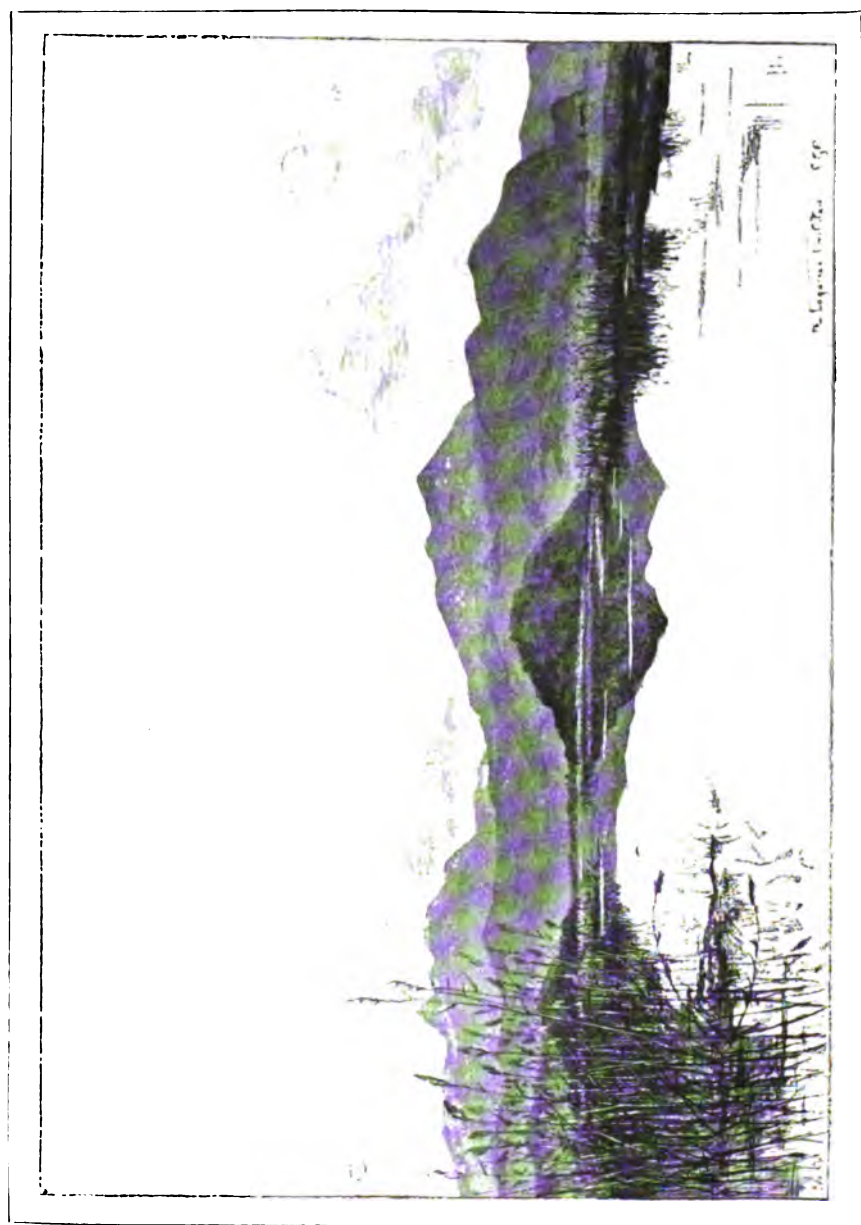
The delta of the river Kalamas affords, in ordinary seasons, excellent snipe and duck shooting, but owing to the heavy rains of the previous few days, we found many

of the marshes transformed into lagunes of some miles in length. Only a few snipe were thus added to the bag during the week we remained here, and the weather, with the exception of one day, was of the worst description, rain descending in torrents from morning to night.

C—— was, however, no fine-weather sportsman, and accompanied by Julio, the captain, and a party of seven or eight others, went in daily quest of pig, though only to return every evening drenched to the skin, and having had no sport.

But the one fine day at Livitatzza was a red-letter one. To obtain a horse or a donkey here was impossible, and my only chance, therefore, of getting a shot was to take to a boat. The water at the farther end of the lagunes was not more than a foot deep, but for a mile or more there was depth enough for the launch, and if I took the duck punt I could paddle to within fifty or sixty yards of the shore. Having settled these preliminaries, on the fine morning in question, we made a start, the launch towing first the dinghy with the beaters and behind her the duck punt. After steaming a mile and a half the dinghy was cast off, and I was then towed by her for another half mile till she touched bottom. After this a paddle of a few hundred yards took me to the head of the lagoon, and as the guns and beaters had to make a considerable detour I had fully two hours in which to select my position.

At the farthest extremity of the lagoon there were two isolated hills covered with a dense scrub, and separated from each other by a strip of shallow water a



THE LAGUNES LIVITATZA.

hundred yards broad. The base of the hills was fringed with an impenetrable mass of reeds and rushes nine or ten feet high, and if I placed myself among these in such a way as to command both land and water, I should be certain to get a shot whichever way the pig went, if pig there were. Instead of an ordinary 12-bore gun throwing an ounce bullet, I had with me on this occasion a double-barrelled express rifle, capable of rendering the fate of any pig a matter of certainty at 300 yards if it could be held right; but of this last I had my doubts.

The time passed quickly enough in wondering what luck would attend me, and in judging the distance of the various open spaces where I might get a fair shot; and long before I expected it, the now familiar shouts of the beaters reached my ears.

Presently, as the beaters came nearer, there was a sudden rush through the scrub on the hill to my right, and I saw four or five pig going away over the top towards where two other guns were standing. There was a sound of a shot or two, and much holloaing and shouting, and almost at the same instant a grand pig appeared coming down the hill at a gallop in front of the beaters. He seemed to be making straight for the water, and in his anxiety to escape he bounded over the ground, sending rocks and stones rolling in every direction. He was not an easy shot, and nobody was more surprised than I, when, in answer to the rifle, the pig turned head over heels and came "pitch-a-pole," as they say in the west country, right down the hill-side like a rabbit and plump into the water at the

bottom, stone dead. In the meanwhile the rest of the pig recrossed the hill and took to the water higher up, swimming lustily across the lagoon for the best part of a mile, and reaching the reeds on the other side in safety.

Two more beats followed, in one of which C—— got a right and left; the bag at the end of the day consisting of no less than four pig. Some Turks in the neighbourhood were glad of the meat; but the Albanians we had brought with us refused to touch it. We were some time before we discovered the reason of this. These poor fellows had had a hard time of it; we had rigged them up a rough tent on the shore and done what we could for them, but they had been wet through for days and a change of clothing was, of course, impossible. They refused the shelter afforded by a hutment not far off because the owners were Turks, but they declined to eat anything except bread and cheese because it was Lent.

Another pouring wet day, spent in beating the hill-sides near the village of Govinitza, brought our stay on the coast of Albania to a close, and on the 10th March we prepared to proceed on our travels.



CHAPTER V.

ITHACA.—ZANTE.—OLYMPIA.

To write anything about Greece that has not been written already would be a difficult task, and at the outset, therefore, it is well not to pretend to do so. The nightingales which sang at the tomb of Orpheus felt bound, we are told, to excel all other birds in the strength and purity of their notes, and writers who attempt to say anything concerning Greece should take a lesson from these exemplary birds for they tread on sacred ground. To write about Greece, as a traveller, is dangerous, for if you treat your travels from a classical point of view you will run into the jaws of that host to whom the topography and literature of Greece is as familiar as that of their own country. On this side, therefore, there seems special room for alarm, and it behoves the writer to be careful. If, however, you eschew matters classical, and determine to deal with modern Greece alone, you may, perhaps, escape Scylla but you will almost certainly fall into Charybdis. The classical host will vote that you have shut your eyes to

the only interesting side of Greece, and the Philhellenic army will treat any adverse criticisms as demonstrating a want of confidence in a great nation. One way or the other, therefore, your path is equally beset with thorns, and there seems no way to escape pricking your feet. The best method, if you are neither a scholar nor a Philhellene, seems to be to go straight along the road you have travelled. Recount what you have seen, and the thoughts that have come uppermost, and then perhaps, your want of knowledge and enthusiasm may be pardoned in the light of a true love for the country.

Nobody goes once to Greece who does not on the first opportunity find his way there again. The charm of the country has a wonderful influence, and whether you be scholar, poet, artist, antiquarian, or merely a lover of God's earth because of the beauties of it, you will find yourself again in Greece, if by any possibility of means you can get there.

And yet what a speck of earth it is to exercise so much attraction. Greece is insignificant in size, and even including the *Ægean* and the *Ionian* islands, the area of the kingdom is only three-quarters that of Scotland. The West Riding of Yorkshire alone possesses a quarter of a million more inhabitants, and the county of Lancaster nearly double the number. "The extreme diminutiveness of the country," writes Hobhouse, "may make some readers suspect that the admiration of the world has been fixed upon a series of insignificant actions, scarcely worthy of finding a place among the histories of empires. But others will only feel an in-

creased respect for a people whose transcendent genius and virtue could give an importance to events transacted upon so inconsiderable a spot of earth."

Greece is, no doubt, diminutive, when compared with other nations, but what nation has so much to show? All that is most noble in art, in architecture, in poetry, and in prose, had its cradle in this narrow span of land. Monuments stand there the grandeur of which we may strain every nerve to equal, but strain and struggle in vain. The dust and ashes of ancient Greece still continue to yield us treasures which will live on as guides to men when tawdry magnificence and hasty realisations have crumbled away; and in centuries to come, when nation has supplanted nation, and this aged earth has grown more aged still, the fame of Greece will yet be fresh and green, and men will still flock to her shores.

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
Long shall the voyager, with the Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore;
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.*

And Greece lay before us now, and, with fair winds, we might in a few days be face to face with "the scenes our earliest dreams had dwelt upon." But before we could turn Ptarmigan's head southward, we had to put our Albanian beaters ashore on their side of the river Kalamas, and it soon became evident that we should not reach Ithaca that night.

* *Childe Harold*, C. ii., 91.

It was late in the afternoon before we got as far as the little islands of Paxo and Anti-Paxo, and, as darkness closed in, we were becalmed, with Paxo still abeam.

There is nothing very remarkable about either of these islands. Paxo is covered with olive trees, and every atom of spare ground is devoted to their culture; but Anti-Paxo is a barren, rocky islet of white limestone, forming a curious contrast to its rich and prosperous-looking neighbour. Insignificant, however, as both these islands are, their names find a place in connection with a curious and well-known legend. The story is a singular one, and though told a thousand times already, may still bear telling once again.

'Twas the hour when One in Sion
Hung for love's sake on a cross,

that a boat sailing from Italy to Cyprus was becalmed off Paxo. The sun had gone down below the great level line of the horizon, and the death-like stillness of night had spread itself over land and sea, when a voice came across the water calling to the pilot of the boat—"Thamus! Thamus!" and bidding him tell that the great god Pan was dead. But the pilot was stricken with fear,

And the rowers from the benches
Fell—each shuddering on his face.*

The boat "stood still in the sea unmoored," until at last the pilot "was forced to cry aloud that Pan was dead; wherewithal, there was heard such piteous outcries and dreadful shrieking as hath not been the like."†

* *The Dead Pan*, Mrs. Browning.

† Old commentator on Spenser's *Pastorals* in May. See also Plutarch on the Defect of Oracles, and Wharton's note on Milton's *Nativity Ode*.

And that dismal cry rose slowly,
 And sank slowly through the air ;
 Full of spirits' melancholy
 And eternity's despair !
 And they heard the words it said—
 Pan is dead—Great Pan is dead—
 Pan, Pan is dead.*

The great god Pan was dead ; the light of the Oracles was eclipsed, and with the death of the Saviour, the false gods "rendered up their deity." The stillness of the everlasting hills was broken, and a voice of weeping was heard—

The lonely maintains o'er
 And the resounding shore.†

Paxo was no longer visible when morning dawned for, during the night, we had drifted, more than sailed, into the channel between Santa Maura and Ithaca.

Close to our left hand towered Leucadia's white cliff, the rock of woe, where "the tenth muse" sought refuge from a broken heart in obedience to the command of "a watery virgin."

O you that love in vain !
 Fly hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main.
 There stands a rock, from whose impending steep
 Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep ;
 There injured lovers leaping from above,
 Their flames extinguish and forget to love.

* * * * *
 Haste, Sappho, haste, from high Leucadia throw
 Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps below !‡

Then Sappho rising, with the silent tears trickling from her eyes, determines to obey the summons,—

And either cease to live or cease to love.

* *The Dead Pan*, Mrs. Browning.

† *Ode on the Nativity*, Milton.

‡ *Sappho to Phaon* : Pope's translation.

Phaon loves her not, and she will seek relief in death. Standing on the summit of the cliff she gazes out over the sea, and before she takes the leap gives forth the prayer—

Ye gentle gales beneath my body blow
And softly lay me on the waves below !
And thou, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,
Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the main.
Nor let a lover's death the guiltless flood prephane !

* * * *

Gods ! can no prayers, no sighs, no numbers move
One savage heart, or teach it how to love ?
The winds my prayers, my sighs, my numbers bear,
The flying winds have lost them all in air !
Oh when, alas ! shall more auspicious gales
To these fond eyes restore thy welcome sails ?
If you return—ah why these long delays ?
Poor Sappho dies while careless Phaon stays.*

But if the white cliffs of Sappho's Leap first attracted our attention, the poetry of Ovid soon passed from our minds when we turned to Ithaca.

Close to our right hand lay the kingdom of Ulysses, and if there is any spot in Greek waters calculated to fascinate the traveller, surely it is this. Yet Ithaca can show no temples, and its name is not bound up with any great event in Greek history. For three thousand years almost everything to do with the island is buried in obscurity, and we do not even know by whom it was inhabited. Venice found it deserted and she set about trying to repeople it, but of the rest we know little or nothing, and Ithaca remains without a history.

But if, in approaching Ithaca, we are compelled to lay history on one side, we can wrap ourselves in the

* *Sappho to Phaon* : Pope's translation.

poetry of the heroic age. Ithaca shines by the light of Homer's immortal verse; he has thrown a halo of romance around the rock; and were it not for his great epic, the island might be as either of its uninteresting neighbours, Arkudi and Atoko, a barren, rocky, waste with little to commend it but crags and cliffs and mountain scenery.

The island is very small, and measures little more than sixteen miles in length by four in the broadest part. It is almost cut in two by the gulf of Molo, the two subdivisions being connected by a lofty ridge of rocks forming an isthmus barely half a mile in breadth. The gulf of Molo is deep and narrow, and cuts into the island diagonally, and it is on entering it that the impressive nature of the scenery of Ithaca becomes apparent. Fine slopes covered in parts by scrub and thorn, and relieved here and there by almond, orange, and wild olive trees, descend precipitously to the water's edge. On the right stands Mount Anoi (Neritum)—no longer "the mount of the rustling leaf," but bold and massive and, as has been often noticed, in shape not unlike Ben Lomond. Straight in front, and occupying the whole width of the isthmus, is the hill of Aetos, and right above this the Black Mountain of Cephalonia rears his white crest. On the left a chain of hills, culminating in Mount Stephano (Neius), trends away in a southerly direction, and at first one looks in vain for the entrance to the harbour of Vathy.

Suddenly, however, a narrow channel opens almost at right angles on the port hand, and threading this one

is almost immediately in the circular pool or harbour of the capital. A small island, scarcely raised a foot above the level of the water, occupies the centre of the pool, and a narrow belt of houses, forming the town of Vathy, bounds the harbour on three sides. The water is so deep that vessels lie close against the houses, and the harbour appears so perfectly sheltered by the hills and mountains which surround it, that the line applied to the port of Phorceys seems more applicable here, for at Vathy, "ships secure without their hawsers ride."

But in Ithaca the truth of the poet's remarks and the accuracy of his description is constantly forcing itself upon the mind, and this alone adds enormously to the fascinating interest of the island.

There is no need to revive old controversies, or to fly in the face of those who may still hold that Ithaca is not the Ithaca of the poet, and that Homer was never in Ithaca at all, for with controversies these pages need have nothing to do ; but if among the pleasures travel affords, there is any charm in finding places harmonizing in their reality with early dreams and old familiar lines, that charm may assuredly be looked for and found without effort in this classic island.

Ithaca is still in a very primitive condition, and we were not a little surprised, therefore, to find that we could obtain a carriage and a pair of horses at Vathy. Thanks to the British Government there is no difficulty in getting from place to place ; the roads, through want of use, are still in an excellent state of repair, and we were thus able to drive about the island in comfort.

The only level piece of ground of any extent in the whole of Ithaca lies immediately to the southward of Vathy, the rest of the island agreeing curiously with the description given of it by "young Ithacus"—

Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
Thin herbage for the mountain-goat to browse,
But neither mead nor plain supplies to feed
The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed :
To sea surrounded realms the gods assign
Small tract of fertile lawn, the least to mine.*

The greater part of the southern half of the island is most precipitous, and, in many places, almost soilless, but wherever the soil can be scraped together, there the inhabitants have made use of the ground.

In order to prepare the ground for cultivation, the stones and rocks are collected and built into low, loose walls; the space at the back is filled in with all the spare earth and *déblai* procurable, and the terrace, thus formed, is then planted with the Corinthian grape or currant-vine. In this way the most inaccessible spots are made use of, and the cultivation is carried on up the sides of the mountains to a height of 1,600 feet above the sea. It is curious, then, to turn to one of the speeches of Eurymachus and find him addressing Ulysses thus:—

Friend, if to labour thou would'st turn thy hand
Upon the outskirts of my own best land,
A fair day's wages thou might'st earn with ease,
In gathering stones and planting goodly trees.

There is plenty to be done in Ithaca in gathering stones and planting vines, but it would be difficult to earn "a fair day's wages" in the island now. The

* Pope's translation of the *Odyssey*.

inhabitants appeared to be miserably poor, and to lead hard lives. Most of them own a small plot of land, and many have a share in one or other of the vessels which trade between Vathy and the neighbouring ports, for the prosperity of the island depends largely upon the enterprise of its people, and no regular line of steamers calls at the capital.

No part of the island is more attractive than the neighbourhood of the fountain of Arethusa, for there several points of interest are in close proximity to one another.

Five miles south of Vathy and on the summit of a high cliff stand a few squalid-looking cottages. This group of hovels—for they are not in reality worthy the title of cottages—is known as the hamlet of Amarathia, and close by is the supposed site of Eumæus's dwelling.

The cliff, which is situated about half a mile from the sea at the end of a ravine or glen, has been known for many centuries as the rock of Corax, and at the foot of this rock is the fountain of Arethusa.

There is nothing, however, in the small level plateau adjoining Amarathia, in the rock, or in the fountain, which is in any way remarkable. A view of extraordinary beauty may, it is true, be obtained from the summit of the rock, but rock and plateau are alike bare, bleak, and uninteresting. The fountain of Arethusa, too, is nothing more than a cave, or recess, where water drips continually, and after the toil of reaching the spot—for it is only to be approached by a narrow, not to say dangerous, path—the fountain seems disappointing and even common-place.

Yet uninteresting and insignificant as these three points are of themselves, we have only to turn to Homer to clothe them at once with life, and to find how well the existing appearance of the ground coincides with his description.

The site of the swineherd's dwelling is, curiously enough, occupied by one or two of those huts which may be found in many parts of Greece, but which, when found here, seem to possess a curious significance, for they tally well with the place in which Ulysses discovered Eumæus.

The wall was stone from neighbouring quarries borne,
Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
And strong with pales.

Wherever there are shepherds of course there are dogs, and as you approach these huts the dogs run out and bark at you as their progenitors did at Ulysses.

Soon as Ulysses near the enclosure drew
With open mouths the furious mastifs flew.

You get accustomed to dogs flying out at you in Greece; but while you wonder here how Ulysses could have had the pluck to "let fall the offensive truncheon from his hand," and sit down on the ground to await their attack—

Sudden, the master runs; aloud he calls;
And from his hasty hand the leather falls;
With showers of stones he drives them far away;
The scattering dogs around at distance bay.

The shepherd of the hut has come to your assistance just at the moment when you were stooping to pick up a stone big enough to "fill your hand," and the "simple

swain" offers to guide you down the rough path to Arethusa's fountain.

And as you go to the edge of the cliff, from the summit of which Ulysses challenged Eumæus to throw him if he spoke not the truth, you pass certain large, natural pits in the ground, and you are at once reminded of Eumæus's tusky herd and the hollows,

Where screen'd from Boreas high o'er-arched they lay.

There is a point, however, in which the present condition of the ground differs materially from the picture Homer has given us of it. There are no "nodding forests," and the shepherd's huts now occupying the site of the swineherd's "rural cell" cannot be counted "sylvan retreats." "Shaded with trees" the country is no longer, and the descendants of the swine of Eumæus would be lean indeed were they dependent on acorns.

When you reach the ravine at the base of the Coracian cliff, you come upon a jungle of evergreens, thorns, and cistus bushes, and while there are no forest trees, there is certainly a forest of stunted oak and wild olive. In his search for his faithful servant, Ulysses is represented as wandering—

Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade
And cavern'd ways the shaggy coast along,

and this description seems to agree well with the wild and rugged scene around you. But let us leave the spot "where Arethusa's sable waters glide," and go elsewhere.

Equal in interest to these three points in the south of the island, are the remains of the city and castle of

Ulysses. They are not by any means striking in appearance; but the site they occupy is magnificent. The two main portions of the island are, as I have already said, joined together by a narrow and lofty ridge, and midway along this ridge is the Eagle's cliff, or hill of Aetos. Here, at a height of 1,200 feet above the sea, stand many huge blocks of stone marking the outline of the city, while perched on the highest peak is the remains of the castle known as the palace of Ulysses. Far beneath you, is the head of the Gulf of Molo, and hard by the entrance to Vathy, you may distinguish the little bay of Dexia (Phorcys), where Ulysses was landed when asleep by the Phœacians.

The view from Aetos is almost impossible to describe. Close at your back is Cephalonia, the grandest of all the islands of the Ionian group; to right and left are grey and rugged heights and the land where "every hill and rock, every fountain and olive grove breathes Homer and the Odyssey"*; in front of you a hundred sunny islands bask in placid waters; and in the distance, arrayed in every imaginable shade of red, purple, and blue, are the mountains of Acarnania.

On leaving Ithaca for Zante and quitting the snug shelter afforded by the harbour of Vathy, we found the wind blowing fresh from S.E., and this necessitated our standing out some way before we could lay our course. Zante was distant forty miles, and we had calculated that five hours sailing ought to take us into port before dark; but when we opened the gulf of Patras our visions

* Mure's *Tour in Greece*, vol. i., p. 39.

of lying comfortably in harbour that night were dispelled. The sea got up, the wind blew heavily out of the gulf, and as the air grew thick, Zante, which had been visible before, was soon hidden from view. Topsails were taken in without loss of time, and half an hour later we were tossing about merrily in a gale of wind.

The mist hung so heavily over the sea that our captain thought it better to keep across the gulf and lie under the land till daylight, and we accordingly shaped our course for Cape Klarenza. The light on this point showed through the fog soon after 10 o'clock, and before midnight we were under shelter. At daybreak the gale moderated and the mists cleared away, and by breakfast time we were at Zante.

Zante harbour is a bad one. It is open to the S.E. and only partially protected on the E. and N.E., and during the four days we remained here we rolled and pitched unceasingly.

There is nothing attractive or picturesque in the aspect either of the town of Zante or the country in its immediate neighbourhood. The bay is bounded by the citadel hill on the north and Mount Scopo on the south, and the larger part of the town lies on the dead level between the two. In such a climate and such an atmosphere it is difficult for any place to look absolutely ugly: a southern sun throws a mantle of colour over the most commonplace landscape, and thus Zante, though deficient in beauty of outline, is nevertheless attractive. The sun, the flowers, and the vines make it rich, but beautiful it is not, and though Theocritus, Pliny, Virgil, and Strabo

have showered praises on the island, Zante to us seemed very tame after Corfu and Ithaca.

A ridge of bleak-looking hills stretches along the western coast, and there is some high land to the south of Scopo; but the whole of the interior of the island is occupied by an extensive plain. It is, perhaps, from the fertility of this plain that Zante has acquired the title of "the flower of the Levant," for the country is here as rich and beautiful as vineyards and olive groves can make it. Vineyards may be said to extend from one end of the island to the other, and of the 125,000 tons of currants Greece exports annually, a large quantity come from Zante.*

The terrible condition of the roads in the island makes travelling a matter of difficulty, for to such an extent have they been neglected that in many parts they are no longer passable. By dint of perseverance, however, we managed to make a few expeditions, and in one of these, to the monastery of St. John, situated twelve miles north-west of Zante, we traversed a large part of the plain.

The road was bordered almost the whole way by vineyards, though occasionally we passed through olive-groves of large size. It was the pruning season, and everywhere people were tending the trees which constitute the wealth of Zante. The anxious time with the

* The quantity of currants exported is increasing annually, and the amount is now nearly 130,000 tons. Of this England takes upwards of 50,000 tons, and since France has begun to make Greek currants the basis of many of her lighter wines, the number of tons of currants finding their way into that country is yearly on the increase.

vines is not, however, in the early spring, for the climate generally insures a plentiful crop. The success or failure for the year depends upon the weather during the fortnight in which the currants are spread out on the ground to dry, and a cloud in the sky then throws a shadow across the face of every man in the island.

But Zante is known for something else besides currants and olives. Wherever the ground is left idle, wild flowers are to be found in profusion, and yellow and purple iris, large yellow daisies, hyacinths, fumatory, pheasant's-eye, lavender, violets, and a great variety of anemones, grow as thickly as primroses in spring time or cowslips in an English meadow.

After we had gone about eight miles on our way to the monastery, we passed through a village where roses and jasmine grew luxuriantly over the houses, and where geraniums, stock, pinks, and carnations, seemed to thrive without care or attention. The air was heavy with the scent of flowers, and we wondered no longer at Zante's title. The sweet smell of the land which sometimes reaches far out to sea even when no land is visible, is one of the most delicate of scents, and on a still evening in the neighbourhood of Zante, the salt air of the Levant is salt no longer, for the soft breezes bring with them the perfume of a thousand blooms.

The monastery of St. John is situated in a secluded nook among the hills, far away from any habitations. It is occupied by only twelve brethren, but its history goes back three hundred years, and the monks show you a circular tower, still bearing the marks of bullets,

where the inmates of the monastery once successfully defended themselves against the Turks.

Inside the walls which surrounded the monastery were a number of buildings, all more or less in a ruined condition; a garden planted with oranges and lemons, and a burial ground. The monks brought us some wine, bread, honey, and pears. Unlike the brethren of certain monasteries to be noticed presently, they kept much of their ground in cultivation by the labour of their own hands. One of them we noticed ploughing; another was tending a flock of goats, and all seemed to work hard.

The head of the monastery was ill, but he sent word to say he would like to see us. I found him lying on a narrow pallet in a small room. Above his head hung a wooden cross, and on the walls, which were black with age, sundry prints and icons. The room was destitute of furniture, and cypress trees grew close against the one small window. The old man had spent his whole life in the monastery, but he was beating his music out now. Conversation between us was impossible; the monk who brought me in told him from whence I came, and then he took my hand and kissed it, and I left him.

The bad weather detained us at Zante several days, and it seemed as if the gale would never blow itself out. Meanwhile we were the reverse of comfortable; the swell swept into the harbour, and the rebound from the wharfs set the crowd of vessels rocking and rolling till one wearied of watching them.

Before going further south we were anxious to visit

Olympia; but we were strongly advised to remain at Zante till the gale moderated, as the harbour we should have to lie in on the opposite coast was little better than an open roadstead.

On the coast of the Morea, twenty-five miles S.E. of Zante, there is a flat-topped sandy headland, called, from its likeness to the shape of a fish's tail, Cape Ichthys. This headland forms the northern boundary of the bay of Arcadia, and on its south side is situated the little port of Katakolo. When we reached this place, after a quick run from Zante in a northerly breeze, we soon found that the description we had been given of the harbour was correct, for the breakwater was in ruins, and the shelter little better than that afforded by any open bay along the coast.

Katakolo is a miserable looking place consisting of not more than twenty houses, and a small railway station. A line eight miles in length connects it with Pyrgos, the principal town in this part of Greece, of which it is the port, and the *raison d'être* of the place itself, as well as of the railway, is the currant trade. For eight months in the year Katakolo is almost deserted, but from June to September the port is alive with shipping, and numbers of big steamers come and carry off the crop of the season to England, France, and America.

From Pyrgos, Olympia is distant twelve miles, and on reaching Katakolo we sent to engage a conveyance to take us there the following day. Meanwhile there was not much to be done; Katakolo and its very uninteresting surroundings did not lend themselves to a sketch,

and the northern shores of the bay of Arcadia are very featureless, so the artistic senses were damped and the afternoon went by in idleness.

The bay of Arcadia is quiet enough now, but what a busy scene it must have presented once in every four years throughout all those centuries in which Greece employed the Olympiads as a regular chronological era. During the weeks immediately preceding the summer solstice, and before the moon was at its full, there arrived in the bay a countless number of vessels of every size and shape. Greeks from all parts of their country's dominions came pouring in in an endless stream, and as vessel after vessel discharged its cargo on the strand, the crowd grew, and men pressed forward over the hills towards the sacred grove of Zeus. It is not difficult to imagine it all: the bay is the same now as it was in the days of the great national festival; the outline of the landscape has not changed; but the ships and boats with their coloured sails, picturesque rigs, and gaudily painted hulls are gone, and the shores of the bay of Arcadia are deserted.

The sun had not risen an hour when we entered the train at Katakolo and with much puffing and wheezing on the part of the engine, wound slowly along the shores of Lake Mouria. Forty minutes sufficed for this part of the journey, but when we reached Pyrgos, one thing caused us a certain feeling of uneasiness. We had come thus far with the firm intention of going to Olympia, but the quality of the vehicle provided to take us there filled us with misgivings. Pyrgos could only boast two

carriages, and we noticed, not without alarm, that the fore-part of the best of these was joined to the hinder part by sundry pieces of string. Its proportions were of the largest, and the horses attached to the pole by the most mysterious looking harness, were of the smallest, but there was no great latitude for choice; we meant to go to Olympia, so we took our seats.

The road from Pyrgos to Olympia surpassed any thoroughfare I had ever travelled on. So far as the engineering was concerned, it was good enough: we ascended hills in skilfully designed curves, and crossed rivers by excellent stone bridges, but the road was innocent of having received any attention for many years. On leaving Pyrgos we drove through several miles of vineyards, the land being everywhere devoted to currant growing; but after a while we crossed a chain of hills, and then the country became more beautiful. Parts of it were well wooded with oak, willow, olive, and Aleppo pine; rushing rivers and streamlets traversed the plains, and the uplands were either carpeted with turf, or covered with gorse, cistus, and broom. The road was bordered in places by rows of Judas and almond trees, resplendent in masses of pink and white bloom, and now and again we crossed large tracts of wheat. Flowers, from the sombre grey asphodel to the brilliant scarlet anemone, grew everywhere; and as the mists of the early morning cleared away and the sun shone in his strength, there was a joyousness in the air and a brilliancy in the landscape of which I have never known the equal.

But I must push on. After many vicissitudes, such

as dragging the carriage over places where landslips had blocked the road, and crossing a veritable slough of despond in the shape of a plain a mile and a half broad, we reached the picturesque village of Trecouli.

We were now nearing the end of our journey, and soon after leaving the village we entered the famous valley of Olympia. To our left ran the Kladeos, and to the southward, gleaming in the sunlight, the broad Alpheus wound along beneath blue, wooded hills. No houses were at first visible, and the valley seemed entirely deserted. But at length we reached a cottage, and our driver told us that the road would take us no nearer, so crossing the Kladeos at a ford, we walked in a few minutes to the scene of the recent excavations.

There is seldom, if ever, anything either beautiful or picturesque in the general appearance of excavated ruins, and those of Olympia form no exception to the rule. For many centuries they have lain buried far below the present level of the ground, and though from time to time travellers have made shrewd guesses about the site of the great Olympieum, the sacred Altis and the numerous buildings and temples which stood within it, have remained until lately undisturbed.

The overthrow of the buildings at Olympia has been attributed to earthquakes in A.D. 522 and 549. Previous to this, many of the works of art had been removed; but as the buildings fell more and more into a condition of ruin, the inhabitants of the neighbourhood took to breaking up the fragments and using them for building purposes. An end was, however, mercifully put to this

spoliation by the bursting of a mountain lake; the Alpheus flooded the plain, and when the waters receded, the ruins of Olympia had been buried deep down beneath a covering of sand and mud. So by degrees even the site was forgotten, but the treasures were at the same time saved for a more appreciative generation.

The honour of having brought those treasures to light again, belongs in the first place to Germany. But England and France have not played an unimportant part in the discovery of the site of Olympia. It was an English traveller, Chandler by name, who in the middle of the last century first drew attention to the remains of a Doric temple in the valley of Olympia. Fauvel followed twenty years later, and came at once to the conclusion that the remains noticed by Chandler were none other than those of the Olympieum. Then there was an interval until Leake visited the valley in 1805, and from measurements pronounced the form of the temple to have been hexastyle. Ten years later an English architect, Allason, followed in Leake's footsteps and prepared the first topographical plan of the site ever published; and it was Allason's plan which the Germans used on first commencing operations.

The glory of laying bare the hidden treasures of Olympia was, however, very nearly being reaped by France. In 1829 a French expedition began opening out the ruins, and actually discovered some of the famous metopes, but after six weeks' work the Greek executive put a stop to what was being done, and the French had therefore to give up the enterprise. After

this nothing further was attempted for a considerable time. Thorns and mastich bushes covered the plain, and for forty-five years the ruins of Olympia remained undisturbed. But in 1874 the Germans came to an arrangement with the Greeks, by which they were permitted to carry out excavations for a period of five years. Funds were at once collected; Parliament made a grant in aid of the work, and in the following year the German Commission began its labours. The terms of the convention between the two Governments were, that all discoveries, except duplicates, were to be considered the property of Greece; so it will be seen that the country which undertook the work could look for little or nothing in return.

But if the treasures which have been recovered by the expenditure of upwards of £30,000, still remain in the silent valley, Germany has reaped all the honour, for her disinterested labours have proved of inestimable value to all the cultured nations of the world.

Standing at the edge of the excavations the prospect is not inviting; here and there a truncated column rears itself out of the ruins, and far and near blocks of stone lie scattered about, apparently, in hopeless confusion. But on descending to the former level of the ground one soon finds that everything is arranged in most perfect order, and it is as easy now to trace out the temples and buildings of Olympia as it is to follow the details of the most famous ruins at Athens or Rome.

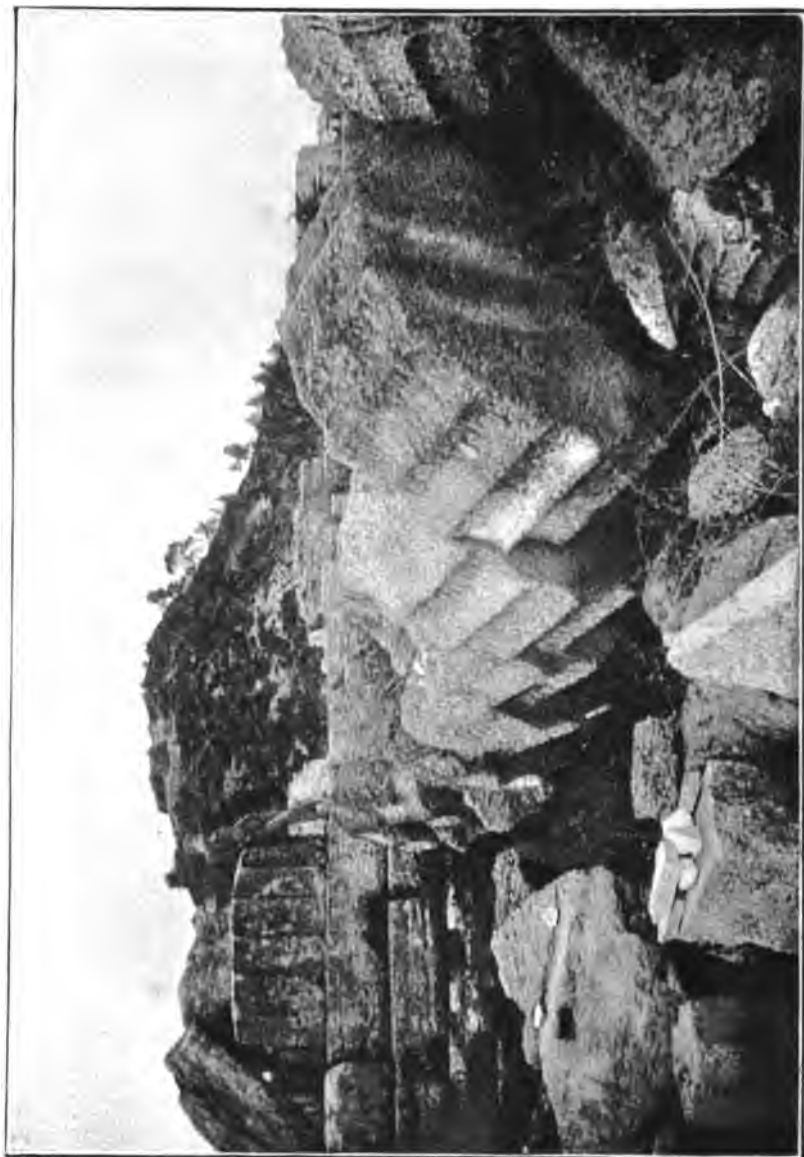
The Altis, or sacred grove of Zeus, was an inclosure measuring 219 yards by 190, and within it stood all the

most famous temples at Olympia. It is unnecessary here to describe the various buildings which have been laid bare both inside and outside this enclosure, for to do so would be to go beyond the province of this volume. I will, therefore, merely note those which stood within the sacred precinct, dealing a little more fully with the temple, round which all the other buildings at Olympia may be said to have congregated.

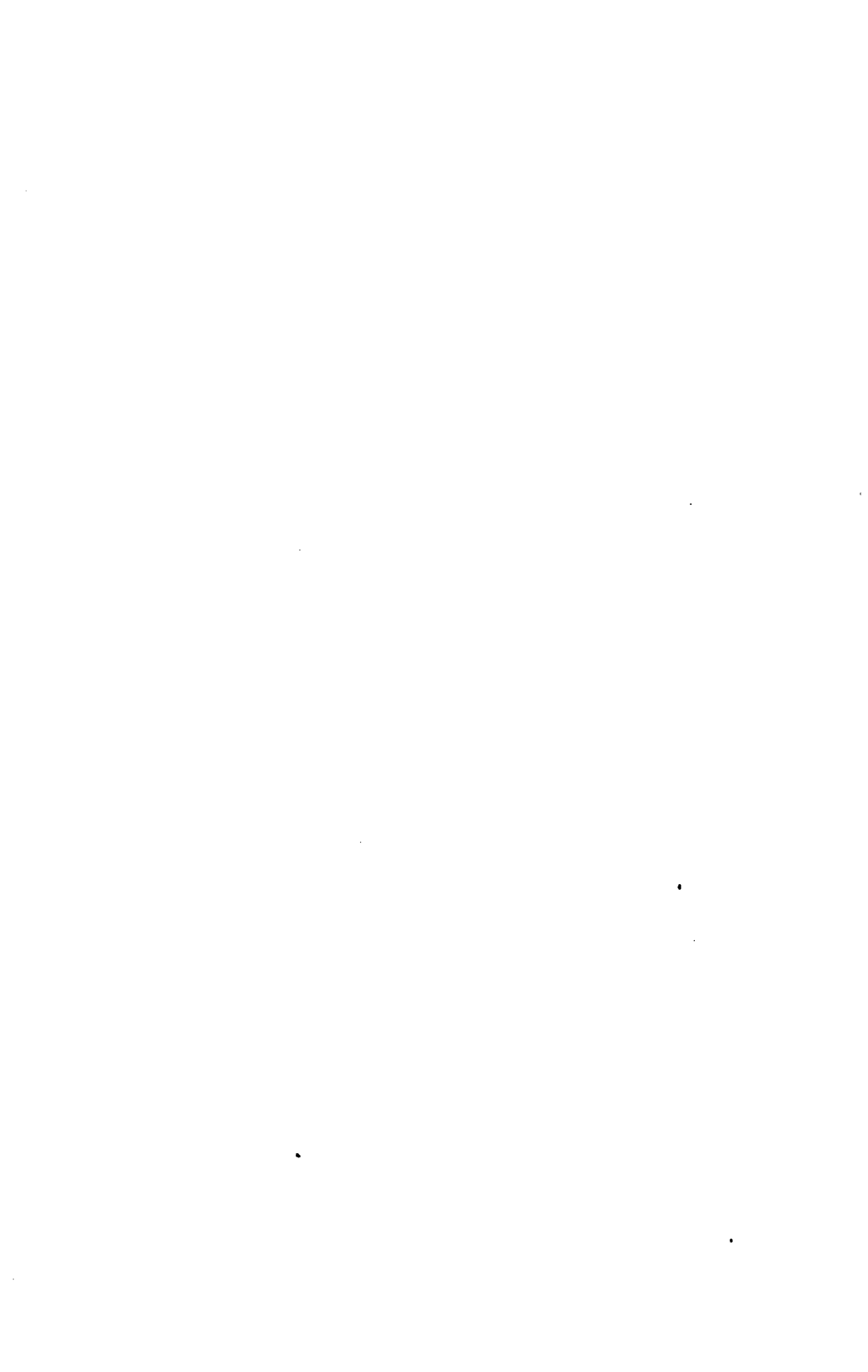
It was impossible, in the few hours at our command, to do much in the way of drawing, but I had with me a small photographic apparatus, and, with this, was able to take a number of pictures. Four of these are reproduced here, and while they are not, perhaps, artistic, their accuracy may possibly make up for what they lack in this respect.

The Olympieum, or temple of Zeus, was one of the most famous buildings in Greece, but no part is now standing save the stylobate. Its remains, however, at once attract attention, not only by reason of their colossal size, but also on account of their being slightly raised above the rest of the Altis. On ascending the stylobate, or platform, the beautiful mosaic in pebbles still remains perfect, and the general level of the pavement is only interfered with by the broken butts of the columns.

It is curious to notice the extraordinary regularity with which these giant columns have fallen. The drums are severed, but the impression conveyed is, that one of the great earthquakes already alluded to, upheaved the temple from the centre and threw the columns outwards, as



OLYMPIA.—A COLUMN OF THE OLYMPIEUM AND THE HILL OF KRONOS.



they lie side by side on the ground very much as the spokes of a wheel splay outwards from the hub. One is therefore inclined to believe that, even if the destruction of the temple was, as some suppose, in part due to the Gothic troops of Alaric, or to bigoted Christians in the reign of Theodosius II., its ultimate overthrow was without doubt, effected by a power passing that of man.

The date of its foundation has been given by Pausanias as about the year 572 B.C., for he says that it was built by the people of Elis out of the spoils of Pisa, and that Libon was the architect. Modern critics, however, assign a century later as the date of its foundation. The style of the building was Doric, and its form hexastyle—that is, with six columns at either end and thirteen at the sides. It was built of the stone of the neighbourhood, a rough, conchitic limestone, faced with a fine cement. The thirty-eight exterior columns formed, with the wall of the cella, the peristyle, or open colonnade round the outside of the building; and the entrance to the temple was at the east end, where you passed from the peristyle, through brazen gates, into the pronaos. The cella was divided into a nave and two side-aisles, there being seven columns on either hand with porticos above them. These columns were united by low walls, or metal gratings, and as you entered the cella there was a wooden staircase leading to the roof. The nave was subdivided, and in the largest of the divisions stood the great statue of Zeus, the work of the immortal Phidias. The west end of the temple was similar to the east end, except that there was no

entrance to the cella from the opisthodomus. Let us, however, look again at the colossal statue of Zeus. The statue was chryselephantine, a kind of work said to have been invented by Phidias, in which ivory was used for those parts of the figure remaining uncovered, and solid gold for the draperies. We have, thanks to Pausanias, so complete an account of the statue, that it may be as well to quote a part of it. "The image," he says, "is in gold and ivory, seated on a throne, and a crown is on his head. In his right hand he holds a Victory in ivory and gold. . . and in his left hand a sceptre adorned with all manner of precious stones. . . . The robes and sandals are also of gold, and on his robes are imitations of flowers, especially of lilies; and the throne is richly adorned with precious stones, and with ebony and ivory; and it is painted with animals and worked with models. There are four Victories, like dancers, one at each foot of the throne, and two at the instep of each foot; and between the feet of the throne are four divisions. . . . For the division nearest the entrance there are seven models. . . and in the remaining divisions, is the band of Hercules fighting against the Amazons. The number on each side is twenty-nine. The throne is supported not only by the four feet, but also by four pillars between the feet. But one cannot get under the throne, for at Olympia there are panels that keep one off." The pavement round the statue was of black marble with a border of Parian marble, and on the base was written:—"Phidias, the Athenian, the son of Charmides made me." The statue was taken to Constantinople in the reign of

Theodosius, where, about the year 394, it is supposed to have been destroyed in one of the many fires continually laying waste parts of that great city.

The temple was roofed at one time with earthen tiles, but these were replaced by tiles of Pentelican marble, the invention of Byzes, of Naxos; and there seems to be a general impression that light was admitted into the building by means of hypethral openings in the roof.

But the exterior of the temple must have been equally as striking as the interior. Both pediments were filled with sculptures. The western pediment, which was the finest, both in execution and design, was the work of Alkamenes, and the subject a fight between Lapithæ and Centaurs. The race between Oenomaus and Pelops formed the subject at the eastern end, the sculptures here being by Pæonius. In the centre of this pediment was a great figure of Zeus, and on the apex, a golden Victory, with a golden shield beneath. Golden vases stood at either corner, and twenty-one golden shields hung round the peristyle. The metopes between the triglyphs of the entablature at the pronaos and opisthodomus, were devoted to the twelve labours of Hercules, and parts of the exterior were, no doubt, ornamented with colour.

The backgrounds of the metopes show that they were once coloured blue, and some of the figures in the pediments were red. In the group of Hercules and the bull, the bull was brown and the background blue, and there can be no doubt that colour was freely used both in the case of the sculpture as well as the architecture.

In order to bring home to the mind of the reader the size of the Olympieium, it may be compared to the Parthenon, and though these temples differed from one another, insomuch that the Temple of Athene was octastyle, while the temple of Zeus was, as we have seen, hexastyle, there was a difference of only 2 feet in their respective heights. In this the Olympieium had the advantage, but the Parthenon was 18 feet longer and 10 feet broader. The columns of the temples varied no more than an inch in height, but those of the Olympieium were a foot greater in diameter (7 feet 3 inches), being the largest Greek columns known.

The raised terrace upon which the temple of Zeus stood was crowded with statues. Some of these were erected by prizemen in the contests; others by States, in return for their success in war, and among them were groups of figures, and statues of poets and of gods. Many were of marble or stone, and others were of bronze; but most of these last were in later days carried off to be melted down in foreign lands. Greece is still rich in treasures, but Imperial vanity has robbed her of not a few. Anastasius once ordered all the finest bronzes collected by Constantine to be made into a gigantic statue of himself, and in this way, and by the hand of man, posterity has been defrauded of many of those works of art which were once the object of a people's love and veneration.

One of the most valuable discoveries of all those made at Olympia, is the statue of Victory by Pæonius. It was erected by the Dorian Messenians, and stood upon



OLYMPIA.—THE PHILIPPEION AND THE HERÆON.

a triangular pillar, at the east end of the Olympieium. The pillar and the statue were found lying close together.

Adjoining the north side of the terrace was a separate grove to Pelops, surrounded by a wall, but this is not of such great moment, and only a part of it, as far as we could judge, had been cleared.

The temple which ranked next to the Olympieium was the *Hēræon* or temple of Hera. It stood at the foot of the hill of Kronos, and close to the north wall of the Altis. The lower portions of many of the columns remain standing, as well as a part of the walls of the cella. We have no record of who built the temple, or who was the architect; but the remains are of the greatest interest, for they form a part of the oldest Greek temple hitherto discovered.* The form of the temple was most uncommon, as it had six columns at either end, and sixteen at the sides. These columns were originally of wood, as was also the architrave, but in course of time the wooden columns were replaced by stone, till in Pausanias' day only one of the wooden ones remained. The stone columns vary both in style and size, and from this it appears that the restoration of the temple must have been carried out at different periods. The building was of the Doric order, the walls being of sun-dried brick; and instead of the stylobate having three steps, it had only two. Judging from the remains, the temple was by no means large; it was long and narrow

* In the plate the remains of this temple appear just behind the Philippeion.

and not of great height, as the columns are said to measure only seventeen feet. The interior was filled with statues, most of which were chryselephantine, and among them was one of Hera seated on a throne.

But the ruins of the Heræon have given us one treasure of inestimable value—the statue of Hermes carrying Dionysus as a babe. It was found lying among a mass of broken tiles, and though the infant Dionysus is much mutilated, the figure of Hermes, with the exception of the lower part of the legs and right arm, is uninjured.

I must pass rapidly over the remaining buildings of the Altis. A few yards west of the Heræon, are the ruins of the Philippeion, or house of Philip, a circular building erected by Philip of Macedon after his success at Chæronea. Close by, and in the north-west corner of the inclosure, are the walls of the Prytaneion, where the custodians of the Altis lived, and where the winners at the festival were feasted.

Immediately to the east of the Heræon were the treasuries—small temples erected by various cities to contain their votive offerings to Zeus—and in front of them stood a row of statues, called the Zanes, erected out of the fines imposed upon athletes who had behaved unfairly in the games. These statues were of metal, and on the base of the first was written: “Not with money, but swiftness of foot and bodily vigour ought one to win the prizes at Olympia.”

On the left of the Zanes, the bases of a number of which have been discovered, was the secret entrance

to the Stadium, and on the right the temple to the Mother of the Gods.

Nearly the whole of the east side of the Altis was occupied by the Stoa Poecile with its long row of forty-six columns, and in front of the Stoa were the seats of honour used during the festival. The great altar of Zeus stood in the centre of the inclosure, and this completes the chief points of interest.

But if we are to picture the Altis as it used to be, we must think of many things besides those just catalogued. Standing on the steps of the Stoa, a scene of rare beauty must have been presented to the eye. Apart from the temples and buildings, there were countless statues, and sculptures of every conceivable variety—figures of athletes and colossal figures of Zeus; effigies in stone, in marble, and in bronze, erected in honour of deities and in honour of men; groups of figures, too, and chariots and horses, such as the brazen chariots of Hiero with race-horses on either side of it and boys riding on the horses, or the chariots of Timon, of Aratus, or Areus. And all these not sculptures as we know them, but sculptures ornamented with colour and gold. Some of them stood on the summit of tall pillars, and between them grew great plane-trees, their shadows cast upon the marble pavement; and a crowd of men in coloured garments passed to and fro and lent life and movement to the scene, while the whole was backed in by the sunny sky, and the ever-varying charm of a brilliant landscape.

The buildings outside the Altis walls were no doubt

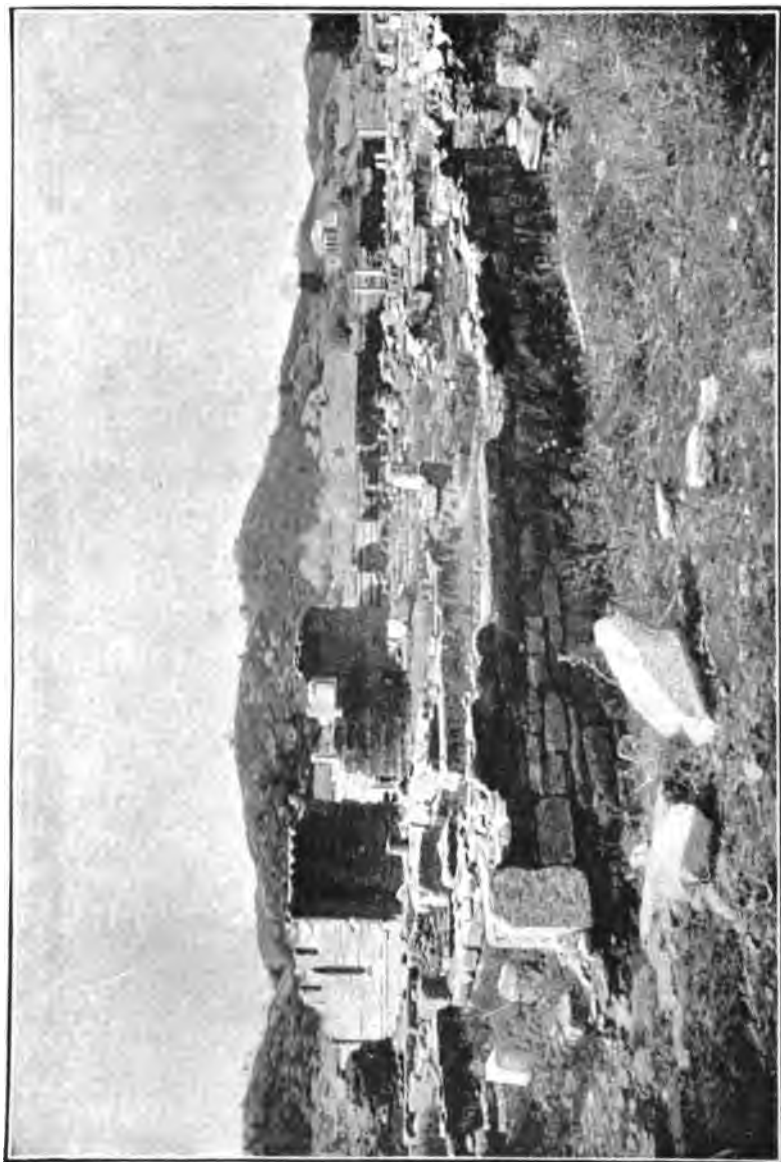
numerous. Some have been cleared, and among these I may mention the Palæstra—a great open court surrounded by colonnades—and a square brick building, where Phidias is supposed to have worked at his great statue of Zeus.* This building was in later days used as a church, and across the east end there is a low, open-worked, stone screen with crosses on it.

All the statues, sculptures, bronzes, and broken relics were, at the time of our visit, stored in a small house and in two long wooden sheds close to the banks of the Kladeos. In the house were the Hermes and the remains of the Victory, as well as countless small native offerings, terra-cottas, coins, masks, helmets, and broken fragments; and in the sheds, all the larger remains, such as the pediment, sculptures, and reliefs, the colossal head of Hera, parts of the metopes of the Olympieum, and sundry architectural remains. All these have no doubt been by this time arranged in the museum which has been built on the hill-side to the west of Olympia, and close to the right bank of the Kladeos, as the building was almost finished when I visited it.†

The climate of the valley of Olympia is most unhealthy during the summer, and the Germans found it necessary to suspend operations from May to October every year. The man in charge of the sheds told us he always left the place in summer, as the mosquitoes and flies rendered his life unbearable; so it appears

* This building appears on the left in the plate facing this page.

† The museum is shown on the right in the plate facing this page.



OLIMPIA —EXCAVATIONS OUTSIDE THE WEST WALL OF THE ALTIS.



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that the plague of ancient times continues to the present day. The people of Elis sacrificed to Zeus as "the Averter of Flies," and the flies at Olympia, we are told, were driven across the Alpheus in answer to the appeal of Hercules.

To omit all reference to the games with which the name of Olympia will always be connected, would be to overlook one of the chief points of interest. "The Eleusinian mysteries and the Olympic games," says Pausanias, "were deemed to exhibit more than anything else the divine purpose," and it is only right therefore that we should glance at the chief events.

The Stadium, where a large number of the contests were carried out, was situated just outside the north-east corner of the Altis, and the Hippodrome immediately to the south of it and close to the banks of the Alpheus. Only a portion of the Stadium has been cleared, but the goals at either end have been discovered, and these show the course to have been about 200 yards in length.* The Stadium probably accommodated 40,000 spectators, and it must, therefore, have been smaller than the great Panathenaic Stadium. The Hippodrome has not received much attention at the hands of the Germans, but the course is supposed to have been about 850 yards in length.

And now as to the games. Pre-eminent among the great festivals in Greece, was that held once in every four years at Olympia. There were other festivals, such

* The German official report shows the course to have been, in English measure, 210·27 yards.

as the Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian, but though, in course of time, these also became national, they ranked as inferior to the festival at Olympia.

We have little evidence of the origin of these meetings, though we know that the Olympic games were held in the earliest days of Greek history. It was not, however, until the year 776 B.C., when Corœbus the Elean won the foot-race, that the Olympiads began first to be reckoned. Iphitus, the king of Elis, is said to have been mainly instrumental in reviving the games, and to him belongs the credit of instituting the suspension of all warlike operations during their celebration (B.C. 884).

In the earliest days, and before the commencement of the Persian wars, the Olympic games were confined to the foot-race, and the time devoted to the contest was limited to one day; but by degrees other events were added to the list, and it became necessary to extend the time to five days. "When [Iphitus] renewed the games," writes Pausanias, "there was a general forgetfulness about the ancient games, but in a short while they got remembered again, and whenever they remembered any little feature of the games they added it to the programme." It was, perhaps, during the fifth century B.C. that the Olympic festival was at its best, and it was at this period especially that the honour most highly prized was the wreath of olive leaves adorning the brow of the victor at Olympia. To be crowned before the whole of assembled Hellas was the ambition of every Greek, for the wild olive wreath not only immortalized the



OLYMPIA.—THE PALÆSTRA.



winner's name, but earned distinction alike for his family and the State to which he belonged. It is not then to be wondered at that men of every grade were alike ambitious of winning this much-coveted prize, and that success in athletic exercises was reckoned of the highest importance among the Greeks. Physical perfection was the one thing aimed at before all others, and symmetry of form, muscular development, strength, vigour, and agility combined with grace, were the qualities which made a man a king among his fellows. From earliest childhood the Greeks set themselves diligently to work to acquire proficiency in athletics by a regular system of training; they rubbed their bodies with oil to render their joints supple, and stood beneath the icy waters of flowing springs or fountains to harden their muscles; several hours in every day were devoted to athletic exercises, and no pains were spared to acquire the very highest form of bodily perfection. Old and young, high and low, were all intent on pursuing the same course, and those in authority were not above stripping off their clothes to engage in a bout of wrestling when the labours of the day were ended. Thus every Greek was more or less an athlete, and admiration for the highly-developed human form was alike common to all classes. We have a distinct reflection of this in their sculpture where the commonest form of decoration, and at once the most beautiful, was the introduction of the human figure in every variety of aspect and in all the perfection of manhood. Models such as our artists can never hope to find, were constantly before the eyes of

their sculptors; and thus their temples, their towns, and their villages were crowded with works, many of which were of the most perfect and exquisite beauty. Numerous examples have come down to us, and while we stand before these with feelings of awe and admiration, we are, at the same time, able to gather some idea of what many of the Greeks must have been at the best period of their history.

Before a man could enter his name for any of the contests at Olympia, it was necessary for him to prove that he was of Greek blood, and we find in the sixth century that even Alexander, the son of Amyntas, King of Macedonia, was not allowed to become a competitor until he had first proved his Hellenic descent. Next, each intending competitor had to show that he had gone through ten months' training, and this was then supplemented by thirty days' special practice in the gymnasium of Elis before the Hellanodicæ, or judges appointed by the Eleans to decide the winners at the subsequent festival. After these rules had been complied with, the names of the competitors were written on a white board and hung up within the Altis. To draw back then was impossible. A combatant who was not forthcoming at the proper time brought disgrace upon himself and his family, and had, moreover, to pay a heavy fine. To such a length was this carried, that even if injuries had been received in a previous contest, a man had still to come forward or be judged as a defaulter and a coward by the whole of the assembled crowd. The pankratiast Serapion, an Alexandrian, is said to have been the only man ever fined

for actual cowardice. He appears to have been so terrified at the sight of those with whom he had to compete, that he fled the day before the contest !

Turning to the games themselves, we find that the most important of all the events was the four-horse chariot race, and to win this was to carry off the blue ribbon of the festival. The horse-races were numerous, and among them were the pair-horse chariot race, the single horse race, and the race for quadrigas of colts ; and there was also a mule chariot-race.

The foot-races were : the long race ; the armed race, each runner carrying a shield ; the single course, or the length of the Stadium ; and the double course, or once up and down the Stadium. The races were run in heats in the same way that ours are in the present day, except that the field was more limited, and each competitor drew for his adversary by lot, the pairs thus drawn being run off consecutively. In wrestling, three throws decided the victory. Boxing was another of the events, the fists of the combatants being bound or covered with strips of hide.* The Pankration consisted of boxing and wrestling combined, while the most complicated of all the contests was the Pentathlon. This was divided into five separate heads, viz., (1) the long jump, (2) hurling the quoit or discus, (3) running, (4) wrestling, and (5) throwing the javelin ; and to be successful it was necessary to win three out of the five.

* When boxing was first added to the programme, the combatants carried weights made fast to the palms of their hands by thongs, and this mode of adding weight to the fist appears to have been *improved* upon as time went on.

Such, then, were the chief contests when the Olympic games were at their best. All were carried out in a condition of nudity according to the custom of the Greeks, a custom moreover, on which they prided themselves not a little, as showing their superiority over barbarians. The tens of thousands of spectators who assembled to witness the games wore no head-covering—all were bare-headed in the presence of Zeus; and among all the vast concourse of spectators there were, at this period, no women. All women of Elis who crossed the Alpheus on forbidden days “were hurled from the summit of a lofty mountain called Typæum.” One, Callipatira by name, dressed herself as an athlete, and took her son to Olympia as a combatant; but when elated at her son’s victory her disguise was discovered. Her life was spared on account of the many victors in her family; but a law was passed that henceforth all athletes were to come to the games naked.

In A.D. 894 the games were celebrated for the last time. For nearly twelve centuries, therefore, we have a continuous record of the great festival, and during all this time it was celebrated with a regularity which is all the more striking when we consider the wars, tumults, and convulsions through which Greece passed in the period. Long before the festival was discontinued, however, the games had lost much of their representative character; the quality of the competitors changed, and the prizes at Olympia passed into the hands of a class we, in these days, should call professional.

It is curious to note that the last winner at Olympia

was an Armenian named Varastad, and that the list of demi-gods and heroes thus closes with the name of a barbarian.

Once, a king's son was excluded from the lists until he had first proved his Hellenic descent; later, Greeks grew prouder of being Romaioi than of being Hellenes, but at the same time their glory passed away like a last breath into thin air.

Our journey back to Pyrgos was unfortunate. I have already stated that our carriage was of great age, and that various parts of it were fortified with cords. We had anticipated a breakdown from the first, and when at last the hinder part collapsed, and the jaded steeds went ahead with a lighter load, in the shape of the pole and fore wheels, we were not surprised.

We were still six miles from Pyrgos, and it soon became evident that there was little chance of our catching the last train to Katakolo. To refit, with the help of some peasants, was the work of an hour; and when at last we reached the station, we found it shut and work over for the day.

Our horses were too done up to go further, even if there had been any road along which we could have driven, and the only thing to be done, therefore, was to ransack Pyrgos for saddle-horses. Two of these were found, and just as it was getting dark we set out for an eight mile ride to Katakolo.

We rode along the railway nearly the whole distance, and the only difficulty we experienced was in crossing the dykes and streams in the marshy part of the plain. The

bridges over these obstacles were formed by heavy balks of timber supported on piles, the sleepers of the railway being laid across them at intervals of eighteen inches. A false step on the part of a horse would probably have had the effect of depositing the rider in the stream ; but the Greek horse is a trustworthy animal, and we escaped without a fall.

As we rode along in the darkness the night air was filled with the croaking of tens of thousands of frogs. The Greek frog is proverbially the noisiest animal of his class, but in no part of the world have I ever heard frogs make the noise of those on the shores of Lake Mouria.

We reached Katakolo, at last, after a march of nearly two hours ; and on arriving on board the yacht, found the captain, the cook, and the chief steward discussing the most feasible way of rescuing us from the hands of brigands.



CHAPTER VI.

NAVARINO.

A CLEAR, bright, fresh morning ; the sun has only just risen, and the yacht's deck is still wet with dew. Gulls are wheeling round and round, filling the air with their shrill, happy calls, while small restless waves splash against the counter, or go rippling along the yacht's sides. A big steamer not far off sounds "eight bells," and sundry brigs and brigantines follow suit in higher keys. Another day has begun, and even the fifty inhabitants of Katakolo will soon be busy again.

A boat is rowing across the harbour to the steamer, her oars sounding in the rowlocks at each stroke ; she "ships" as she glides to her destination, and is soon hooked to the falls and hoisted on to the davits. White jets of steam are issuing from the steamer's side, and with much scrunching of engines and rattling of chains, the anchor is brought dripping to the cat-head. Already the throbblings of her great pulse are audible, the blue water is churned white and spread out in foaming circles round her stern ; then she moves slowly away, bound we

know not where, and gulls come and fish where she was moored.

The few miserable houses of Katakolo are still in cold shadow, but the day is going to be a hot one, and if we would make use of the little wind there is we must be stirring. So we shake out our sails, and man the capstan, and in half an hour we too are under way.

Independence is one of the greatest charms of yachting, and accordingly from Katakolo we determined to sail for Navarino. The distance is only forty-eight miles, but before we had made twenty of these the wind dropped, and left us till late in the afternoon on a sea which was literally as smooth as glass; the gulls went to sleep on the top of the water, and we took to fishing to pass the time.

But there is nothing tedious in being becalmed in the Bay of Arcadia, for the scenery is lovely in the extreme, and even if the fish would not bite, and the sun was hot, a scene of no common type was all day long before our eyes. There were mountains of beautiful form, varying in colour from deepest purple to rosy pink and pale blue; there were snowy peaks which shot up into the sky in the far distance, and seemed to be suspended in mid-air; there were woods of rich green, and tracts of vivid yellow cultivation; there were red rocks standing out of yellow sand, and washed by cool, blue-green waves; and over all there was spread that marvellous glow which is ever one of the chief characteristics of Greek landscape. We may find scenes equally beautiful in Italy and in Spain, in Southern France, and in the fjords of Norway

—if indeed the natural features of one country ever bear comparison with those of another—but nowhere shall we find the golden glow of Greece. Travellers have commented on it through all ages, but to realise it we must go to the land where, in Thackeray's words, "the sea seems brighter, the islands more purple, the clouds more light and rosy than elsewhere," and where, with another refined touch, he adds, "the hills rise in perfect harmony and fall in the most exquisite cadences."

So all day long we remained in the Bay of Arcadia, and not until late in the afternoon was the glassy surface of the sea ruffled by the wind. Then the main boom began yawing and creaking as though it was being awakened from sleep, and once more we were on the move. The breeze lasted just long enough to take us into the narrow channel between the island of Proti and the mainland, where it seemed we were destined to pass the night. But just before sunset we had another example of the fickleness of these seas, and the wind, which had previously been light and from the N.E., suddenly chopped round to the S.W., and blew half a gale. This necessitated our making a couple of tacks to get into Navarino, and it was 10 o'clock before we flew, close reefed, into the shelter of the famous bay.

A typical Greek light, of perhaps two candle-power, was burning on the rocks at the entrance to the bay, but Navarino itself showed no signs of life. The great harbour, measuring three miles long by two broad, was untenanted by a single vessel; and when we let go close in shore in seventeen fathoms, our cable continued to

run out with noise enough to rouse every inhabitant in the slumbering town. With such dimensions and such depth of water, Navarino bay may well be considered the finest harbour in the Morea. It is, however, not only broad and deep, but also well sheltered. The island of Sphacteria stretches right across its western side, and the only practicable entrance is a channel three-quarters of a mile in breadth, between the detached rocks into which the southern end of the island is broken, and a promontory on the mainland. The northern entrance is nothing more than a narrow passage, so shallow as to be even fordable in places, and only deep enough, at best, for ordinary row boats. The harbour is thus well protected, and only when a gale is blowing from the S.W., is any swell experienced in the bay. Even then it is possible to find shelter, and good anchorage is to be obtained on the northern side of a small island, called, from its likeness to the shape of a tortoise, Chelonaki. The rocks at the entrance to the bay are shown in the accompanying sketch, and the story goes that in the outermost of these a Turkish saint lies buried, the rock being named Deliklibaba.

The town of Navarino is a quiet little place, situated at the southern extremity of the bay. It consists of, perhaps, two hundred houses built round three sides of an open, sandy square, close to the water's edge and possessing something of the character of a Spanish *almôda*. A church is situated just beyond the town, and in a small circular cemetery not far from it, lie the remains of those who fell fighting in the bay, in '27.

DELIKLIBABA.





At one time Navarino contained 6,000 inhabitants, but there can scarcely be a third of that number living there now. The place is entirely modern and thus affords little of any interest to the traveller ; the old walls that once encircled the town have disappeared, and the ruins of a fine Venetian aqueduct, together with a citadel of the same period, are all that now remains of former days.

The morning after our arrival, C—— and I, accompanied by Julio, endeavoured to see something of the neighbouring country, but the expedition was not a pleasant one as far as the writer was concerned.

The horse that had been found for me—in reality a small white pony—was marvellously caparisoned in a rug of many colours, which not only completely enveloped all parts of the animal, save head and tail, but served also to hide the wooden structure by which he was surmounted. To this structure, or saddle, was suspended a pair of the usual very short and exceedingly small Turkish stirrups, so that, before getting under way, considerable alterations in rig were necessary. But there were other faults which were past remedying: *the irrational*, as the genus horse is termed by the Greeks to distinguish him from the rational or human being, was forty years of age and suffered from a chronic cough ; but even these difficulties were not sufficient to deter us altogether, and after a while we set out, accompanied for the first part of the way by a considerable crowd.

Threading the narrow streets, or rather alleys, of the town, we soon reached the open country. The track over

which we travelled was formed by the ruined remains of a narrow Venetian pavement, which, for roughness of going, was scarcely worse than the rocky hills that bounded it on either side. The charm of Greek scenery never dies, but the country round Navarino is certainly of the barest description, and it was only here and there that any cultivation was visible.

After travelling some distance, we arrived at a house surrounded by trees and standing by itself in one of the many ravines. The owner, an old man, was at the door, and with the high-bred manner and politeness which seems to come naturally to a Greek, invited us in. In course of conversation he gave it as his opinion that the country, the people, and the land were good enough, but the Government was bad, adducing as an instance that two years previously, 6,000 dr. were collected from the local people towards defraying the expenses of bringing water into the town of Navarino, yet from that day to this no attempt had ever been made to begin the work. The Government talked a great deal about economy, but he could not see that they practised it. "Take the case of the lighthouses," he continued, "formerly they were kept by old soldiers and other worthies, but now these have been turned out and their places taken by retired officers of the army at increased salaries."

Like all Greeks, our friend had very pronounced political opinions, and after stating, not without emphasis, that there would be no war with Turkey because the Government did not mean to fight, he told us that he remembered witnessing, when a boy, a skirmish between



NAVARINO.

Greeks and Turks during the War of Independence. It took place not far from where his house now stood: a party of Greeks had exhausted their ammunition and were using the butt ends of their guns; they were getting the best of it, when a strong force of Turkish horse came up, charged, and cut down every one of them.

Of the battle of Navarino, as of the many horrible incidents which took place in the neighbourhood during the great struggle, he had no recollection, for early in the war he had been taken by his parents to other parts of the country. Before leaving he begged us to taste some of the wine made on his own property, and after a while we bid our friend adieu.

The irrational one had now travelled far enough, and while C—— and Julio continued their walk I returned to Navarino alone. On the way back I fell in with some Greek soldiers who were escorting a party of prisoners into the town. A more cut-throat looking lot of individuals than those prisoners I have never seen, and as the soldiers only numbered four and the prisoners ten, I was not sorry to notice that the latter were all chained together.

Looking down upon Navarino from the tops of the hills which encircle it, the little town presents the appearance of a place that is just beginning to spring into life again after a long period of neglect. There are signs of past prosperity and of present enterprise; but there are also many ruined walls and houses without inhabitants. Its narrow streets are dirty and unpaved, and the Navarino of to day is a long way from being a thriving place.

Yet the ruined pavement winding over the hills was once perfect, and the citadel overlooking the town was once garrisoned by the soldiers of Venice; the harbour was wont to be full of shipping in those days, and the strand to be thronged with a gay and busy crowd. But there is none of this now, and the massive, ruined arches of the aqueduct and the battlements of the old citadel walls, stand in curious contrast to the modern, struggling town of Neo Castron. Venice made the place, and though the Turks laid the first stone, the day of Navarino's prosperity seems to have been limited to the narrow span of the Venetian domination. The Morea was a waste, and civilization had almost ceased to exist when Morosini wrested the country from the Turks; but the rule of the bride of the Adriatic, though brief, was beneficent; the touch of her hand is visible in many parts, and here in quiet little Navarino the marks of her good work are not by any means wanting. There is no reason, however, to go back to times so distant. There is a page in the more modern history of Navarino which seems to deserve our attention and which should be familiar, for in the days—not seventy years ago now—when the foundations of New Greece were being carved out with the sword, the little town bore its full share of suffering and changed hands more than once during the long war.

Here is one fearful episode in Navarino's history. In the hot days of August 1821, the Turks, then holding Navarino, were besieged by a strong force of Greeks, a blockade of the place being at the same time instituted

by sea. Starvation soon compelled the defenders to surrender, and the terms of a capitulation were arranged. All valuables, and public as well as private property, were to be given up, and the Turks were to be transported to the coast of Africa.

On the 19th of August the embarkation commenced, each individual, whether male or female, being first of all searched. Disputes soon arose about the way the search was carried out; words grew louder, and the quarrelling became general. The Turks being without arms were unable to defend themselves, and in the massacre that followed, every man, woman, and child was put to the sword. The scene must have been a horrible one indeed, for in less than an hour every Turk in Navarino lay dead. Women stripped of their clothing sought refuge in the sea, and were there shot down; children were "dashed against the rocks" or "hurled living into the sea," and even the wounded became the sport of the soldiery. The corpses washed ashore, and lying in heaps on the beach in the full glare of the sun, soon threatened a pestilence, and the Greeks, to save themselves from this, were forced to break up old wrecks and burn those they had slaughtered.* The capitulation had been violated, but this circumstance was destined to have many a parallel in the next few years, for treachery, though it can never be condoned, was as common on one side as it was on the other. The horrors of the Greek Revolution cause those even of the Indian Mutiny to pale. On the one side the war was a

* *Finlay*, vol. i.

war of extermination ; on the other it was one in which every Greek was content to sacrifice his life. Horrible, however, as the whole story reads, and blood-stained as is every page, it is relieved here and there by many a grand deed, and many an heroic act ; and though fiendish passions went unrestrained and men's blood boiled within them, yet we have only to read of the siege of Missolonghi to see what men, and even women, too, were content to face in that one long, bitter, struggle for freedom.

It is impossible to judge the Greek Revolution by any ordinary standard, for the war was a fight for freedom on the part of a nation that had been in bondage for centuries. Greece had been a stranger to freedom ever since Philip of Macedon conquered the country. She had groaned under the Romans and under the Turks, but the time had now come when the Greeks as Christians were to strike off their fetters and free themselves once and for all from the military despotism of a Mahomedan Power. The Revolution was the last cast of the die in the history of a great people. They possessed no generals, no statesmen, no leading men of genius ; but they had an army of heroes, and they were united. Far off in the ages of the past they had stood at the head of all the nations of the world ; were they for ever to be the "slaves of slaves" ? It was true that the frequent attempts at emancipation during the past hundred and fifty years had been abortive, but with one more united effort might not light show again on the horizon, and life and liberty spring up in the near

future? Had not England, America, and France afforded them instances of how the weak may combat the strong, and did not the outcome of revolution in those countries point the way for them too? The mysterious breath that gives new life, that raises up one nation and lets another fall; the voice that calls in silence yet finds an echo in many hearts; the unseen wave that flows over a country, yet that drives men before it into concerted action; the one great Power whose law is immutable and not to be denied—was not the writing already dimly visible on the wall, beckoning them on?

Revolution is never sudden in its growth; so in the case of Greece there was no sudden drawing of the sword. The revolt was neither wholly political nor wholly religious; it was the outcome of natural causes not to be denied. Liberty sooner or later was sure, but there was no instantaneous springing to arms. Slowly was the steel whetted; gradually was the spark fanned into a flame: a Power unseen worked on beneath the surface—a Power as sure and certain in its action as the action of the sun upon the budding tree—but not until the cup of bitterness, despair, and wretchedness was full to overflowing was the blow struck, and not until men had borne and could bear no more did the fight for independence become a reality at last.

And are we wandering from Navarino? No; for with the name of Navarino will be associated a great fight—a fight that did as much, perhaps, to help on the cause of freedom as any blow struck throughout the

war. The battle of Navarino was described by an English Prime Minister as "an untoward event," and in one sense, no doubt, it was so; but in another, it may equally be considered in the light of a remarkable accident. In England it contributed to the fall of a Ministry; in Greece it shattered the Ottoman Power, and gave fresh life to the remnant of a great people.

But before coming to the battle of Navarino let us retrace our steps for a moment.

Two years before the fight in the bay (May 1825) Navarino had again passed into Turkish hands, but not until 1826 did it feel the full tide of misfortune. In that year Ibrahim Pasha arrived there with a large force of Egyptian soldiers, and making it one of his bases of operation, on account of the ease with which he was able to draw his supplies from Alexandria, over-ran the Morea. In the course of six months the whole country was devastated. Not only against men and helpless women was war waged, but with blind fury and with the heated passions of the past five years brought now to boiling point, vengeance was let loose over the land, and the very face of the country was changed. Crops were cut and fired, the meagre flocks that remained were driven off, even the trees were cut down or torn up by the roots to make the desolation more complete. Men, women, and children were massacred in hundreds, and the inhabitants, paralyzed with fear, fled bewildered over the country. "A market," says Alison, "was opened at Modon for the sale of captives of both sexes, who were crowded in dungeons, loaded

with irons, unmercifully beaten by their guards, and often murdered in pure wanton cruelty during the night." "The desolation," writes Finlay, "was so complete that, during the following winter, numbers of the peasantry, particularly women and children, died of actual starvation," and the subsistence, it might be added, that the survivors were able to obtain was eked out by the addition of boiled grass.

But when Greece was thus well nigh exhausted, when the Greek soldiery could no longer stand in the open against Ottoman troops, and when hope seemed almost dead, England, France, and Russia came forward with fresh offers of mediation coupled, on this occasion, with a demand for an immediate armistice. The Porte, however, refused to admit the interference of the foreign Powers, while the Greeks, on the other hand, readily accepted the armistice. Ibrahim was accordingly shut up in the Bay of Navarino by the Allied fleets, and being thus foiled in his operations by sea, continued to devastate the country with even more vigour than before.

As winter approached, the difficulty of maintaining the blockade increased, and the Allied admirals, fearing lest they should be driven off the coast, and seeing that in their present situation they were quite unable to put an end to Ibrahim's enterprises ashore, determined to enter the bay. To fight formed no part of their instructions, but to enter the bay rendered an engagement a matter of certainty. They clung to the hope that "the imposing presence of the fleet might stay the effusion

of blood without provoking hostilities," but their advance was a hostile act, and its result might have been easily foreseen.

Let us take our stand once more then on the hills above Navarino and picture to ourselves the events of the memorable 20th October 1827.

It is a peaceful quiet afternoon; a light breeze is blowing in from the sea, and the great bay of Navarino, the long island of Sphacteria, the little ruined town, and the citadel, lie spread out beneath us like a map.

On the hills about the citadel are the camps of 20,000 Turkish and Egyptian troops, and on the southern extremity of Sphacteria are lines of earthworks and batteries also filled with men. The bay is crowded with ships, for a fleet of eighty-two sail, mounting nearly two thousand guns, lies anchored there in three lines. The ships are disposed in the form of a crescent, and so as to command the entrance to the bay, twenty-two heavy ships are in the front line with their broadsides directed towards the centre, and behind them, so as to fill up the intervals, come, first, twenty-six frigates and corvettes, and then, further back, thirty-four corvettes, brigs, and schooners. At the extremities of the lines are fire-ships ready at any moment to be cut adrift, and, on a given signal, to burst into sheets of flame. The decks of all the vessels are crowded with men, and boats are darting backwards and forwards to the shore; a hot sun is beating down upon the placid waters and shining on sails and spars, and hulls; the rippling waves sparkle in very joyousness, and the whole bay is a scene of life

and movement. The country round still looks rich in the golden light, and the far off mountains of Arcadia are gleaming; but here and there dense columns of smoke proclaim that the war of extermination is being carried out to the bitter end, and that bloodshed and desolation still dog the footsteps of Ibrahim.

Now let us cast our eyes seawards. In the offing is another fleet flying the flags of three nations. It has been standing on and off the coast for some weeks, and has become a familiar sight to those ashore; but to-day it appears to be heading straight for Navarino under full press of sail, and to be manœuvring with some set purpose.

As it approaches, we see that the fleet is in two columns with eighteen sail in the weather and eight in the lee line. Eleven of those to starboard fly the white ensign of England and seven the tricolour of France, while the remainder to larboard carry the flag of Russia: ten line-of-battle ships, ten frigates, and six sloops, twenty-six sail in all, coming over the sea on the same tack and leaning slightly over as they feel the breeze. The white spray is dashed away from their bows as they cleave the blue water, their sails stand stiff in the wind and their appearance grows every minute more and more majestic as they come closer and closer to the shore. Truly it is a grand sight. But their every movement has been watched, and signs of fresh activity are visible on board the vessels at our feet. Boats are plying with greater energy, signals are run up, and the slopes in front of the citadel are covered with a swarm of men.

Yet these last are not arrayed in martial order, but stand watching the magnificent spectacle of the approaching fleet. The troops on *Sphacteria* are following their example, and they, too, have their gaze directed seaward.

The crews of the eighty-two vessels in harbour are now performing prodigies of work, and the hum of many voices and the rumbling of guns being run out reaches the ear.

Are they clearing for action? Are they going to give battle, and if so, why are the guns silent ashore when the *Asia*, *Genoa*, and *Albion* are already within the narrow entrance? Surely if there is to be a battle the shore batteries would have opened fire ere this and destroyed those ships one by one. But the guns are silent, and the men who should be working them are standing in front of their batteries as spectators.

Meanwhile, the *Asia*, leading the van, and carrying the flag of the British admiral, sails slowly on towards the crowd of vessels in front of her. Her crew are busy furling sails and tending braces, preparatory to anchoring; and while she is followed closely by the *Genoa* and *Albion*, the greater part of the Allied fleet is still far out to sea, for the breeze has almost died away. Handled with most perfect skill these three ships take up their stations; the *Asia* alongside a vessel carrying the flag of the Capitan Bey, and the *Genoa* and the *Albion* close to a line-of-battle ship and a large double banked frigate. Still there is silence; is it only the silence that comes before the storm?

Now the French frigate *Armide* sails in round *Sphac-*

teria, and places herself opposite the outermost frigate on the left hand. The *Cambrian*, the *Glasgow*, and the *Talbot* are close astern, and these take up their stations next to her, and abreast of the three English line-of-battle ships already anchored. *La Sirène*, carrying the French Admiral's flag, also enters the bay, and, at the same time, the *Dartmouth*, the *Mosquito*, the *Rose*, the *Brisk*, and the *Philomel*.

The wind is dying rapidly away ; the English squadron is within the harbour, but the *Scipion*, the *Breslau*, and the *Trident*, all French line-of-battle ships, are only at the entrance, and none of the Russian vessels have come up at all as yet. Now would be the time for the Ottomans to strike, if strike they must. Their ships are cleared ; they outnumber the Allies more than three to one ; and they are full of confidence, for their numbers give them that. Yet they hesitate. Strict orders have been issued on the Allied fleet that not a shot is to be fired except in self-defence ; so they, too, make no move, and the silence remains unbroken.

The troops on shore stand there silently, counting the ships as they come in. Sixteen have arrived, and ten remain outside with sails scarcely drawing. Sixteen against eighty-two. But even as we count, and when the minutes seem to pass like hours and the suspense to be no longer bearable, a boat is lowered from the *Dartmouth*, and rows quietly across towards one of the fire-ships. Many are watching her, when suddenly, as she goes on her way, a puff of smoke is seen on board the Turkish vessel she is approaching, followed by the

report of musketry; and, at the same moment, an English lieutenant and some of his boat's crew fall dead. The *Dartmouth* and *La Sirène* open with musketry in return, and it is evident that the match has been laid to the train at last. Still, some think that this sputtering fire of musketry must be due to an accident, or to some misunderstanding, and that, therefore, it will cease. But no; a heavier sound follows, and a shot from a Turkish man-of-war goes crashing into the Frenchman's side. The silence is broken, and the next instant the boom of the Turk's first gun is followed by the roar of *La Sirène's* broadside. Other vessels follow suit; the *Capitan Bey* fires into the *Asia*, and in a short time the British flagship is engaged with a Turkish admiral on one side and an Egyptian admiral on the other. With incredible rapidity both these flagships are destroyed, and drift to leeward, mere useless wrecks, the crews escaping from them as best they can. But as they clear the front, the *Asia* is exposed to the cross-fire from the ships in the second and third lines, and in another moment her mizen-mast is carried away by the board, and some of her guns are silenced. All the other line-of-battle ships are equally employed, and the *Genoa* and the *Albion* are pouring in their broadsides, though not without suffering severely in return. The whole bay is enshrouded in smoke, and the air is filled with the roar of the combat and the rending of ships' sides. Explosion follows explosion, and as the shore batteries are also brought into play, the ground quakes beneath us.

But the action is not at its height yet, and an hour passes before the Russian squadron takes up its station in the bight of the crescent, and adds its fire to the rest. One after another the Turkish vessels are being blown up, and from out the smoke floats many a hulk in flames. The surface of the bay is strewn with wreckage far and wide, and boats, crowded with men, are seeking refuge on the shore. The fire-ships have been let go, and *La Sirène* narrowly escapes being set on fire; but she is saved by the gallantry of the crews of the *Dartmouth* and her consorts, and the fire-ships are turned aside in flames. The shore batteries have been silenced, but for another hour the battle continues with unabated fury. The first shot was fired at 2 o'clock, and it is now nearly 6; most of the enemy's heavy ships have been destroyed, and, as darkness comes on, the thundering of the guns grows less. But there is no need of daylight to continue the fight, for the night is made as bright as day by the flames of the burning vessels. A dense pall of black smoke reflects the glow beneath, and the waters of the bay appear as a sea of molten liquid, in which the hulls of vessels stand sharply defined. The cannonade has almost ceased, and the Turks and Egyptians are setting fire to their ships before escaping to the shore. All night long the Allies are toiling to save their vessels from the sea of flame by which they are surrounded, and the whole bay is a scene of the most terrible confusion. As the night wears on, the air is rent by one explosion after another, each one followed by an awful stillness,

till spars and yards and timbers fall again on the water like raindrops after a heavy thunder-clap.

But morning dawns at length, and what a scene of carnage and desolation is now visible ! Of the eighty-two Turkish vessels, fifty-three have altogether disappeared, and of the twenty-nine that remain, few are fit to keep the sea. And the Allies, too, have suffered not a little. The British squadron has lost more than one distinguished officer, and out of 642 killed and wounded in the fleet, 259 are English sailors and marines. Even the finest of the men-of-war are little better than wrecks, and the line-of-battle ships that sailed so proudly into Navarino the previous day will now with difficulty be got as far as Malta, for temporary repairs. The victory has been dearly bought, but from the chaos rises a song of hope, and from the date of the hard fought battle of Navarino the independence of Greece is assured.

It is time we closed the scene. The shadows of evening are stealing over the country, and the burgee *is* being lowered on board the only craft in the harbour. All is peaceful in the town of Navarino, as if such things as battles and murders could never be—had never been.

Once more we look round at the country, and once more we are struck by its desolate appearance. Does it still bear traces of fire and sword—does it still carry the marks of the hand of Ibrahim ?

The night was dark and stormy when we left Navarino; the sea rolled in in a heavy ominous looking swell, and the wind came fitfully in spiteful, angry gusts. Vivid

flashes of lightning now and again illumined the sky; distant thunder rolled and rumbled along the horizon; and there seemed every prospect of bad times ahead. Yet the next morning we were sailing peacefully across the Gulf of Kalamata, and the most striking of those three promontories, which give to the Morea the form of a plane leaf, lay before us.

We kept close in shore in order to see as much as possible of the home of the Mainotes, and certainly the wild and rugged appearance of the promontory corresponded well enough with all we had heard and read of its former inhabitants. The magnificent range of Mount Taygetus, whose higher slopes are always clothed in snow, forms the backbone of the country, and off-shoots of these mountains descend in great contorted masses to the sea. Storms sweep round its forbidding looking coasts during the greater part of the year, and it is only in the northern portion of the country, or in ravines and valleys where shelter is afforded from the fierce winds, that cultivation is possible. The southern end of the promontory, or land of bad designs as it was called, is almost wholly barren, and it was here that those swarms of pirates, who were the dread of all attempting to navigate these seas, chiefly had their homes. Unable to find subsistence in their exposed and rocky country, the southern Mainotes, known as Kakavouliotes, depended largely upon the success of their piratical raids, and thus they infested the coasts, and, after the manner of Greek pirates, established regular centres for collecting tribute from the neighbouring towns and villages.

Fishing-boats and small trading-vessels could not put to sea without running almost certain risk of capture, and even when fortune favoured them, and they escaped the Greek pirates, they were more than likely to fall into the jaws of the corsairs from Malta and the coasts of Africa.

But if the Mainotes were wild, reckless, and independent as pirates, they were scarcely less so as klephts ashore. The cliffs of their iron girt coasts, and the hurricanes which were always associated with them, rendered the Mainotes tolerably safe from invasion, while the rocky and precipitous passes of the northern border made an attack by land a matter of no ordinary difficulty. Being thus in a measure secure from external interference, they continued for century after century in a condition of semi-independence. They prided themselves upon the purity of their descent,* and though they were subdued in turn by the Romans, the Turks, the Franks, and the Venetians, still they were never really subjugated, and law and order never reigned in their country. Chastisement overtook them more than once, and their villages on the coast were time after time destroyed. The Turks succeeded in levying the haratch,† and even in collecting a customs duty; but over and over again the Mainotes beat back the invader, and

* It is probable that the purest blood in Greece may still be found in this interesting part of the country, and while some writers consider the Mainotes to be the descendants of the Spartans, it appears more probable that they are descended from the Helots.

† A capitation tax, payable by all infidels, excepting priests, cripples, and the blind.

there was no limit either to the privations they were prepared to suffer, or to the heroism and daring they were ready to show in the defence of their country and their liberty.

But excellent as this trait in their character was, and often as it has been held up to eulogy, it is well to remember that social life in Maina was, nevertheless, overshadowed by the presence of a fearful evil. In no country, not even among the Pathans on our Indian frontier, could blood feuds have been carried to greater length than they were formerly in Maina. The northern portion of the country was rich, and silk, valonia, and cotton were to be found among its exports ; but how, and by whom was a great part of the industry of the country carried on ? By women and children. The male portion of the community rarely left the immediate shelter of their own houses. The houses were in reality forts. They were built as towers ; one low door, situated many feet above the ground, and approached by a stone stairway standing apart from the building, alone gave ingress ; a board, or movable platform, connected the stairs with the doorway, and thus acted as a drawbridge ; the walls were all loopholed, and no lights were burnt at night for very fear ; the lower floor was used as a stable, and all day long men watched their enemies from their own vantage grounds.

To such a length, indeed, were blood feuds carried, that murder was legalized by common consent, and even by written contracts. "Bonds, signed by living individuals," Finlay tells us, "were shown, in which the penalty, in

case of non-fulfilment, was a clause authorizing the holder to murder the obligant or two of his nearest relations."

Feuds descended from father to son, and revenge was handed down by will. Children were not exempt from risk; boys of tender years were murdered to balance the account of their forefathers, and the female portion of the population were alone safe from the hand of the assassin. To the women, therefore, fell the lot of cultivating the country, and assassination, as has been aptly said, remained the privilege of Mainote gentility. But some semblance of law and order was brought into Maina at last, and when Greece quieted down after the great struggle, and Capo d'Istria was appointed President, the country received the attention of the Government. The Mainotes revolted against the President, as they had previously revolted against all interference, and in the end Capo d'Istria was murdered on the steps of the church of St. Spyridion at Nauplia, by the brothers Mavromichales.

The Government issued an order that all the towers in Maina were to be forthwith destroyed, but the order was as so much waste paper, and the Mainotes replied that the Government had better come themselves and destroy all the towers at one and the same time, otherwise nobody would be safe. Bavarian troops were thrown into the country for the purpose; but once more the Mainotes banded together to stop the invader. They captured a large body of these Bavarians, and after having kept them for a while, and made them dance

and sing, they compelled the Government to ransom each soldier at so much a head. The value they placed upon officers and privates alike, was a franc; but the story goes that they made an exception in the case of a drummer who played the fiddle very well, and for him they asked a dollar.

But this was the last flash of independence in the life of the Mainotes. More troops were sent into the district, and some of the chiefs were found to be open to bribery. The towers, which had been the outcome of the feuds, were in some places destroyed by those who had been bought over; a regiment of Mainotes was raised to keep order; and thus, after the lapse of many centuries, tranquillity reigned once again in the country.

Many of the tower houses are still standing, and as we sailed close in shore, we could make out several of them without the aid of a glass. Travelling in the country is no longer attended with any risk, and the Mainotes to-day are as hospitably inclined as any Greeks elsewhere.

It was late in the afternoon before we rounded Cape Matapan, but the same fresh breeze which had hitherto favoured us held good, and took us across the Gulf of Kolokythia into the Cervi Channel. Here, between the barren-looking island of Cerigo and Cape Malea, the sea breeze died away, and, for once, the land breeze, which generally follows in fine weather, never came. Consequently, we were left to drift about in the currents for which this channel is so well known, and during the

night narrowly escaped colliding with a great barque in ballast.

We were directly in the track of vessels bound for Athens, and as one steamer after another passed us, the yacht was rocked on the swell they raised, much as one may see a Thames gig rock in the wake of a passing launch. Save for this, the sea soon settled into a flat calm, and the big barque and ourselves were left to turn and twist in obedience to the currents.

Suddenly, however, we became aware that we were being drawn irresistibly towards the vessel we had been watching. We had all our sails set, and so had she, even to her royals; but while there was no wind stirring sufficient to shake the lightest reef point, still there could be no doubt the distance between us was gradually lessening. Her lights were burning; but though voices might have been heard at a great distance, no sound came from her. She sat there motionless on the water, as some great phantom, her sails standing out against the sky in black squares, and the moon shining here and there upon her spars and rigging. Slowly and almost imperceptibly the distance between us grew less and less till we were scarcely more than a fathom apart.

Her hull and masts loomed high above us, but there was no sign of anyone aboard her. Our fenders were hung over, and poles were got ready with which to shove off, for it seemed as if in another moment we must be entangled in her rigging. Just at the critical moment,



A CALM NIGHT.

however, and when a collision appeared inevitable, our main boom gave a lazy creak. A draught had come over the sea, and in another instant we brushed past the barque's stern.

A parting hail obtained no answer but an echo, and the phantom ship drifted in silence away.



CHAPTER VII.

HYDRA.—CORINTH.

DURING the night we drifted slowly past Cerigo, and by 4 A.M. were close to Cape Malea.

Upwards of thirty years ago a vessel bound for Athens was caught in a storm off this cape, and foundered. Of those on board her only one reached land alive, but that one survivor still lives, and ever since the day of his escape he has spent his life at Cape Malea alone. How he existed at first must be left to conjecture. The country all round him was uninhabited, and even now there are no signs of any houses for many miles along the coast. Selecting a sheltered nook among the rocks close to a spring, he built himself a hut, and there he has lived all these thirty years.

It is his habit to signal to passing vessels, and his whereabouts have in this way become known to the crews of the small craft trading up and down the coast. These leave him provisions which are laid upon a rock on the shore ; for the hermit never comes to thank, but on

the contrary hides himself on the approach of any boat. Many have endeavoured to find him, but to no purpose; his hut is always empty, and a small square plot of cultivated ground close to it, is all there is to show that someone lives there. A life of more perfect solitude could scarcely be conceived. Even the hermits of Athos see something of their fellow-men, but not so this lonely man of the rugged cape; and if he spends his time looking out over the waves, waiting for the day when the waters shall give up those who sank when his ship went down, we need not wonder.

Perhaps he had noticed us as we lay becalmed the previous evening, for the watch reported that when we were close in to the land a light was shown for five minutes at a point about fifty feet above the water and on the south-west side of the cape; but on coming on deck ourselves, Malea was ten miles astern, and we had lost our chance of leaving something on the rocks for the comfort of the old hermit.

All that day we sailed slowly on towards the Peiræus. The wind was light, but with every stitch of canvas set we got as far as Belo Poulou island before dark. Then the breeze died quite away till even our lightest sails hung motionless, and there was no hope of getting further. Once more we were becalmed, and when day dawned, and the sun showed again in the east, the surface of the sea was like burnished silver, and there was no sign of any wind. As the sun rose higher and higher, and the pink flush faded out of the sky, the day grew hot; the dew disappeared from the rail, and the

decks dried and became snow white. Would the wind ever come?

Two sailing brigs, as like one another as two sisters, stood up side by side on the horizon many miles away, but they were motionless; a steamer showed herself for a time, leaving a long trail of black smoke as she went on, but at length she was hull down, and then masts and funnel disappeared, while the trail of smoke remained, for there was no wind to drive it away.

The man at the wheel stood looking out over the stern; two others of the watch were "passing time o' day" in the bows; the cook came up from the galley in his white cap, and pitched a bucket of slops over the side, but the bits of potato-peel clung to the yacht, for the yacht was motionless, and no wind came. We were only thirty-five miles from the Peiræus; would the wind ever come?

To some, perhaps, a calm may appear tedious: the air of inaction about the ship; the stillness; the wish to get on, yet being unable to—all help to bring about a feeling of lassitude. We dawdle about the deck; we hang over the bulwarks and look down into the water; we wonder how deep it is, and try to take soundings, but all our fishing-lines joined together will not touch bottom; then we leave the yacht, and go for a row in the dinghy—anything to while away the hours till the wind comes. And some calms are tedious. To lie all day long under a grey sky, and out of sight of land, is a different thing to being in blue and sunny waters within a mile or two of the shore. Yet one way or the

other calms have their charms no less than storms; for the sea is always changing, and, like the sky, is never two hours the same.

As for ourselves in the *Ptarmigan* we drifted with some unknown currents till we were quite close to Hydra, and remained within a mile or two of the island all day.

The name of Hydra is not connected with classic times, and if it was inhabited in the old days we know little or nothing of its history.

Four miles to the west, the coast of Argolis is rich in oranges and lemons, but Hydra is nothing more than a barren limestone rock eleven miles long, two and a half broad, and 1,950 feet high at the highest point. So destitute is the island of soil that only a few acres are capable of cultivation, while the inhabitants have difficulty in finding ground in which to bury their dead. With so few attractions the island naturally remained uninhabited; but in 1780 a body of Albanians came over from the Morea, and anxious only to escape from Turkish exactions, established themselves in a small creek on the western coast. The colony thus formed was destined a century later to achieve great things for Greece, and the descendants of these rough Albanians have their names engraved on a brilliant page of Greek history.

As the settlers in Hydra increased, a government, oligarchical in character, was formed, and the welfare of the island was entrusted to the hands of three elders elected by the remainder. But by degrees the interests of a larger population had to be considered, and the

number of the elders was then increased to twelve, with a primate named by the Capitan Pasha on behalf of the Sultan. The islanders were thus practically an independent community, and their affairs were entirely in their own hands.

A small tribute, amounting only to a few pounds, was paid annually to the Porte, and, later, the Hydriots were called upon to find and maintain two hundred and fifty sailors in the Ottoman fleet, but this was all.

The characteristics of the people who had thus made the island their own, differed little from those of the Albanian race elsewhere. They had many faults, but they had at least one redeeming feature about them. They were avaricious, proud, given to quarrelling, selfish, and somewhat addicted to the hasty use of the knife, but in one point they differed greatly from the Greeks—they were scrupulously honest, and the Hydriot merchants soon became known all over the neighbouring seas for the punctuality with which they discharged their obligations.

Owing to the sterile nature of the island it was impossible for the inhabitants to maintain themselves without intercourse with other countries, and this fact drove them from the first to become sailors. Schooled in this way by necessity, the Hydriots became the best sailors in Greek waters, and they were thus able to strike many a blow in the time of need for the country of their adoption.

When the War of Independence broke out, Hydra was in a most flourishing condition. The population had

grown to nearly 20,000. The creek where the first settlers had established themselves, was surrounded with houses which rose one above the other on the steep face of the island. Those along the water's edge belonged to the richer classes who delighted in making their homes handsome and capacious; but all alike, even to the smallest, were strongly built, with walls of great thickness and solidity. Apart from a fleet of smaller craft, Hydra, at the outbreak of the war, possessed no fewer than 150 vessels of over 100 tons. These were all merchantmen. Wealth in Hydra brought with it position; but apart from a certain rank thus acquired, the inhabitants, whether capitalists or members of the Government, differed little one from the other in education or dress. The love of gain was common to all, and it was customary for the merchants of Hydra before starting on a voyage, to accept money from families to be laid out to the best advantage. On their return the result was paid over to the lenders, and it is said that no instance is known of a Hydriot merchant having defrauded those who had trusted him.

For a short time after the outbreak of the Revolution, Hydra took no active part with one side or the other. But at last she hoisted the Greek flag: a fleet was formed with other vessels from Spetzas and Psara, and then began that course of naval engagements which continued throughout the great struggle. Wherever there were operations afloat, Hydriot ships and Hydriot men bore their full share. Their merchantmen were turned into vessels of war, and many smaller craft were

given up to be used as fire-ships. But gallant as the part the Hydriots played in the war undoubtedly was, and though their fleets were led by such men as Miaoulis, Kondouriottes, Budures, and Tombazes, all of them Hydriots, and all of them commanders who earned fame in the struggle, their operations were not altogether free from the stain of unnecessary ferocity. The passions which had seized upon the minds of men were infectious, and while, perhaps, none of those direct violations of engagements, which were so terribly common throughout the war, can be laid to the charge of the Hydriots, there is more than one instance of prisoners being slain by them, and women and children being ruthlessly put to the sword. Their operations were distinguished by pluck, daring, and good seamanship; but at the same time there was a want of unanimity in their actions which was due, principally, to an absence of all discipline in their ships. The selfishness, which had always been a conspicuous trait in their character, often exhibited itself, and their avariciousness came out to the disadvantage of the cause they were fighting for.

The island has now lost much of its former prosperity, and the population has decreased, but the merchants of Hydra still maintain their character; their town is clean and orderly, and no people in Greece stand higher socially, than those who can claim descent from the Hydriot leaders in the war of liberation. In Greece men are equal, rank is unknown; but though there is no nobility, place is still given to those with honoured names, who can point to the events of sixty years ago,

and show that their forefathers gave up their money, their lives and their homes for their country.

By the evening the current had carried us so close to the eastern end of the island that we obtained an excellent view of the town of Hydra and the channel which separates it from Argolis; but there was still no wind, and when darkness came on we had moved only a few miles from where we were in the morning. Soon after 10 o'clock, however, a fresh breeze sprang up suddenly; we passed Ægina at midnight, and half an hour later sighted the white light on Lipso island (Psyttalea). The night was very dark, so we lay to when abreast of Salamis and waited till dawn to enter the Peiræus.

Most people who have been to sea, and especially those who have done any yachting, know the sensation of waking gradually from sleep, and realising that they have arrived in port. In a sailing yacht there is always an element of uncertainty about the time of arrival anywhere, and thus the morning often brings with it a surprise. The first thing we miss is that sound of rippling water which has lulled us to sleep night after night: then, as we realise that the yacht is not moving, unwonted sounds reach our ears—men calling to one another in strange tongues; the crowing of cocks; the rumble of a cart along a stone wharf, and the crack of a whip; the sound of vessels getting under way; the deep-toned whistle of a steamer; and the noise of oars. These, and many others, mix themselves up with our last dreams, and then we open our eyes and find that our clothes are no longer swinging backwards and for-

wards, or standing out from the walls of our cabin, but hanging motionless on the pegs where we had put them the night before. There can be no longer any doubt about it, we say to ourselves; we must have arrived somewhere.

So it was with us on reaching the Peiræus. We had been three days at sea, and had turned in before the breeze sprung up which carried us to our destination, so that we knew nothing about it, and waking brought us a surprise.

For weeks I had been looking forward to this day; so after dressing with feverish haste, and tumbling up the companion in my eagerness to see the famous harbour and perhaps Athens in the distance, I reached the deck. Never shall I forget my disappointment.

For many months I had been picturing to myself Athens and the Peiræus as they had been pictured to me in boyhood. In my flights of fancy, I had clung almost against hope to the visions which had been stamped upon my mind at happy Eton. The form of the harbour, the outline of the coast, were they not familiar to me, and had not I drawn maps of them a score of times? I shall see them at last, I had said to myself: of course everything will be changed; all these new books tell me so; but some parts will be as they were in the old days, even if they are not as represented in my ink-stained copy of Smith's Greece.

The old books had been brought out and dusted; books—must I own it?—which had been thrown on to the back of a shelf at the conclusion of a curriculum

in which nothing modern was allowed. Earnest endeavours had been made to brush up forgotten knowledge, for I must not tempt the gods by entering Athens and its port as an ignoramus. So I set myself to work at histories and classics and ancient atlases, and as I read I built castles, and my anticipations of what I was to see grew and grew, till at last I came to picture the Peiræus filled with gilded triremes. But when I reached the deck, my castles one and all fell to the ground, and my anticipations were swept away, for before me was the hideous reality, and for a moment I almost wished I could go back.

A bitterly cold wind was blowing from the northward, and the air was filled with dust so that the landscape was shrouded as in a fog. The harbour was crowded to excess with great steamers from France, Russia, Italy, and America, with ships-of-war from England and Austria, and with some hundreds of Greek trading-vessels.* The wharfs were lined with white houses of every size and shape, and the streets were ill kept and ankle-deep in dust. Everything looked modern and new; there were no remains of ancient days; the picturesqueness of the place was gone; but in the noise and bustle noticeable on every side there were signs of a growing trade, and, in one word, the Peiræus looked prosperous—prosperous in the possession of upwards of thirty steam factories, and a population numbering not

* Of the 9,000 vessels which enter the Peiræus annually of a burden of two and a half million tons, 7,500, it is said, are Greek traders. See a valuable pamphlet by Charles Cheston, entitled *Greece in 1887*.

less than 80,000 souls. And all this is the work of the last few years. Sixty years ago the Peiræus, M. Moraitinis tells us, was a deserted plain, the present town being then represented by three cottages; while in the year 1868 there was not a single factory in the place.* Now, merchandise to the value of over two millions sterling passes through its streets annually, and the town stands as an index to the growing prosperity of Greece.†

We remained several days in the Peiræus, but, as may be imagined, spent as little time there as we could.

The railway connecting the Peiræus with Athens was the first constructed in Greece, and trains now run every half hour between the capital and the port. It seems almost wrong to traverse the classic road, and to cross the Kephissus in a common-place train; to wake the echoes of the groves of Academe with the noise of iron wheels, and to go rattling on towards Athens in clouds of dust, steam, and black smoke. Still if you decide to take this route in preference to being jolted for an hour on a bad road, you must not mind having all the sentiment knocked out of you when the train pulls up at a miserable little station, and you find the name "Phalerum" painted in rude

* *La Grèce telle qu'elle est.*

† In Williams's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 379, there is the following amusing description of the Peiræus in 1820:—"Instead of the riches of the world pouring into the Peiræus, we could perceive nothing but a heap or two of tiles, and a few empty oil and currant jars. The sailors, for want of shelter, were lying rolled up in their capotes, like as many Russian bears, upon the beach; one of them was sleeping with his head within a jar."

letters on a common piece of board. Your castles are brought to the ground, but you recover. On rounding a curve soon after leaving Phalerum, a thrill runs through your frame as you look out of window. "Yes, there it is," you say to yourself, "there it is at last"; there is nothing strange in that; it is an old friend come to life; something so familiar that one seems to have seen it many times before. An embankment hides it for a moment; then once again it shows itself—the first and foremost of all ruins, the Acropolis of Athens with the temple of Athene.

As the train approaches Athens, you catch sight of the Temple of Theseus, the Areopagus, and the Pnyx; and you see the Acropolis, now quite close, and old Hymettus in the background. The town of Athens is not visible, for it is right ahead, so once more the mind goes back to ancient days. But while you dream, the train pulls up at a station—Athens station. In another moment you are on a crowded platform; you go outside to find rows of cabs, and the usual complement of hotel omnibuses; and as you turn into the nearest street you have to avoid being run into by a steam tramcar. It is impossible to enjoy Athens like this.

Athens is all modern; it does not even stand where the greater part of old Athens once stood. The rows of white houses, the trim clean streets, the public buildings and palaces, are all the growth of the last half century. In 1832 the inhabited dwellings in Athens consisted of "a few wooden houses, one or two more solid structures, and the two lines of planked sheds

which formed the bazaar";* and when Otho became the first king of the Hellenes, not a single house in his capital could be made fit for his accommodation. Now the town contains a king's palace, a university, national museums, free schools, hospitals, many very fine houses, squares, and streets, and a population of nearly sixty thousand.

The air at Athens, as at the Peiræus, was filled with dust—not dust in clouds, such as one sees in England on a March day, but fine white dust which floated always in the air, and reminded one forcibly of the *hramsîn* in the Desert. We drove first to the Acropolis, and leaving the carriage at the bottom of the hill, mounted the winding path which leads up the western side of the rock. We were soon nearing the summit, and after passing through an archway, stood at the foot of the Propylæa. But we press on up the ruined marble steps and past the shattered columns, for there is one building we want to pay homage to first. We glance at the beautiful little temple of the wingless Victory, and look up at the vast blocks of marble forming the architrave of the inner gateway of the Propylæa; but we do not stop till we are in the presence of the Parthenon, and the greatest of all temples is before us as a reality at last.

Can any man, however thoughtless, stand here without emotion? There is no other building in the world that bears the weight of history this does. Four hundred and thirty-eight years before Christ it stood

* See Jebb's *Modern Greece*, p. 64.

a finished temple, perfect in architecture and in adornment. Century after century flew by; legions from a western country came and fought beneath it; laid siege to it, and took it. Generations of men passed away like shadows flitting over the ground, but the temple of Athene remained unchanged. The centuries grew to a thousand years; the pagan temple became a Christian church; the smooth surfaces of its inner walls were emblazoned with the images of Saints, but still the vast building remained perfect—matchless in calm and dignified splendour. All through the latter part of the Middle Ages, it heard songs of Christian worship, and foreign monarchs went in and out through its great portals. The sun of one nation set, another rose, but still the temple never changed. Men battled at its feet; Allah was triumphant, and the great Christian church became a mosque. Already it had withstood the hand of time for nigh two thousand years; the ravages of the storm never harmed it, and so it remained to grow golden in colour, perfect as when Ictinus and Callicrates set it up, and Phidias adorned it.

So it might be now had not man marred it. But the guns of the Mahomedans have been planted in front of the Propylæa. Ten thousand soldiers of Venice occupy the town beneath; their guns are placed at the foot of the Museum hill, and others near the Pnyx. The Acropolis is crowded with Turkish troops; two thousand five hundred of them are besieged there, and the face of the temple is already being defaced by shot and shell. A bomb drops into the Propylæa, explodes a powder

magazine, and wrecks that. Spare powder and ammunition, with things of an inflammable nature, are stored in the ancient temple; they will be safe within those massive marble walls which have stood there unharmed for more than twenty centuries. But not so. A day passes, and in the evening another bomb falls crashing through the marble tiles upon the roof; the ground quakes with the terrific force of the explosion; two hundred mangled corpses are flung into the air; part of the massive walls on either side, together with many of the giant pillars which have stood there through all these ages, fall thundering to the ground; and on the 26th of September 1687 the glorious temple of Athene is a ruin. Profane hands are laid upon the sculptures, which are to be taken away to adorn a foreign capital; but the clumsy soldiers of Venice let them fall, and the works which Phidias placed on the eastern pediment lie on the ground in broken fragments. Then there is a calm; the temple is a ruin; the town at its feet fades away; the plain around is well-nigh deserted; but the majesty of the temple remains. Other hands come from the west and strip it, strip off the last remnants of its adornment; its priceless sculptures are taken away, sold for gold. But the temple retains its majesty still. Shorn though it be of all adornment, battered and defaced, ruthlessly and without thought, men still stand in its presence with a feeling of awe, and as they stand, worship.

As I advanced towards the great steps of the stylobate I stumbled, and on looking down found a segment of a

shell which might have been fourteen inches in diameter. Such were the missiles, then, which were launched at the Acropolis, if not in the days of Venice, perhaps later when Greece was fighting for freedom, and such the missiles which completed the wreck. Man worked his own doom here as elsewhere in the world, thoughtful for the success of the hour, while those that come after are left to suffer grief for sins and errors which can never be repaired.

Of the well-known ruins of the Acropolis, more especially of the Eretheum and the Propylæa, it would be idle of me here to speak. We remained several days in Athens, visiting the temple of Theseus, the fifteen lofty Corinthian columns which mark the site of the great temple of Jupiter Olympus, the theatre of Dionysus, the tombs, and all those many relics of bygone times which Athens boasts. The places we went to one day seemed to be surpassed in interest by others the next; but of all these I must be silent, leaving the reader to the words of those whose long lives of study fit them to speak, and whose writings add so much to the pleasure of the ordinary traveller. A sketch must be a sketch and not a finished picture.

Among the expeditions we made from the Peiræus was one to Corinth. The distance is a little over fifty miles, but there is a good railway, and if the trains often go no quicker than a man can run, the slowness of the travelling has its advantages, for it enables one to look more closely at the country. The line makes a

considerable detour before breaking through the hills which surround the plain of Attica, and it thus took us an hour to reach Eleusis. Seen from the village of Eleusis, the beautiful bay has more the appearance of a lake, for the island of Salamis looks as if it blocked all exit to the sea; but as we skirted further along the shore we could make out the narrow channel where Themistocles defeated the Persians, and the hill where Xerxes sat and viewed the famous battle.

Midway in our journey we pulled up at Megara. The arrival of the train was evidently the great event of the day, for the station was crowded with villagers—Albanians in their woolly garments; petticoated Greeks; and women dressed in plain white skirts, coloured aprons, and long white cloaks richly embroidered in red and blue.

After leaving Megara the line winds along a ledge cut out of the precipitous sides of Mount Goureaia, and now and then it crosses great rifts in the mountain by narrow iron bridges. When you look out from the tops of these bridges, you feel as if you were suspended in mid air; great cliffs tower up into the sky and vast masses of rock seem to overhang the line, while two hundred feet beneath is the sea where the water is so clear that grey boulders and patches of blood-red seaweed are visible at the bottom.

A mile or two of road like this, and we passed from the glare of the rocky gorges to a country overgrown with Isthmian pines. The views of the Saronic gulf now became more glorious every minute, and the colour-

ing of the landscape increased in brilliancy. Looking seawards, Ægina, Angistri, Kyra, and Poros, and a whole host of islands and headlands were dressed in tints of purple and violet, rose and blue; across the head of the gulf, the broken line of the coast was backed by the snowy mountains of the Morea, and sea and sky seemed to vie with one another in their depths of sapphire colour. In the foreground the soft green pine trees were interspersed with countless cytisus bushes, each a mass of vivid yellow bloom; the sun kissed the sandy soil and the whole surface of the land shimmered and danced in the heat; but in shady places, where grey lichen-grown rocks pushed themselves up among brambles and ferns and shocks of coarse grass, there were masses of anemones and drifts of snow-white narcissi. Greece is pre-eminently a country of light and of clear atmospheres, and whether in the silvery dawn, the golden glow of mid-day, or at sun-down when naked limestone hills turn from scarlet to crimson and crimson to deep purple, there is ever a peculiar radiancy in the colouring which no other part of Europe can equal.

We arrived at New Corinth at 11 o'clock after a journey of four hours, and at the station found a carriage emblazoned with the Royal Arms of England awaiting us. In this noble and capacious vehicle we set out for the Acro Corinthus, and in the course of an hour pulled up by the side of seven colossal Doric columns. These columns are each composed of single blocks of sandstone twenty-one feet high and nearly six feet in

diameter, and until the remains of the Heræon were unearthed at Olympia they were judged to be the oldest in Greece. Who set them here, or to whom the temple, of which they once formed a part, was dedicated, is unknown; the other portions of the building, even to the foundations, have disappeared, and we are therefore only able to guess at the date. With the exception of two or three miserable-looking cottages, there are no houses in the neighbourhood, and though the ground upon which the columns stand is sufficiently elevated to afford a good view of the Gulf of Corinth and the Isthmian plain, no signs of other ancient remains are to be seen.

Close behind the ruins, and "seeming the very clouds to kiss," is one of the finest natural fortresses to be found anywhere in the world. The Acro Corinthus stands out from the neighbouring mountains a vast, solid mass of rock, looking as if it had been planted there by nature for the purpose of defending the isthmus and blocking all entrance to the Morea, and beneath its shadow once lay a large and prosperous city.

The advantages of her position made Corinth the commercial centre of Greece. Her territory was insignificant, but her ports on either side of the isthmus afforded accommodation to trading vessels from all parts of the known world, and in her markets, merchants from the East and from the West met together.

Within the walls of the city the arts flourished, and the inhabitants delighted in adorning their capital and adding to its splendour. Palaces and temples, theatres and countless examples of the most finished sculpture,

were to be found in its streets and open spaces, and the fame of the city spread far and wide. Princes from foreign countries visited it, and those who required statuary or decorations for their buildings came and took counsel at Corinth.

But while the tastes of the inhabitants lead them to indulge more in the arts of peace than in those of war, their enormous wealth enabled them to maintain a large force of mercenaries, and in this way to appear formidable enemies to the rest of Greece. Their extended colonial possessions at Coreyra and Syracuse, Apollonia and Potidaea, as well as in many other parts, gave them weight abroad, and in their power and their wealth the Corinthians occupied a position which no other State could wrest from them. Once in every three years a great festival was held at their gates and many thousands assembled to witness the games and enjoy the luxury and splendour for which the city was so famous. Yet though riches flowed into the laps of the Corinthians, and there seemed no limit to the glories of their capital or to the measure of their commercial success, they were given to the most reckless indulgence of their passions, and Corinth was known not only as a treasury of the arts, but also as a place where immorality went unrestrained. There was thus a dark as well as a bright side to the picture.

For many hundred years the Corinthians continued to enjoy their liberty and independence, safe beneath the shadow of their great and impregnable citadel; but in the second century before Christ, the end came—the

city was entered, the works of art were carried off or destroyed, fire was laid to the walls, the men were put to the sword, the women taken as slaves, and the once gay and beautiful city of Corinth was no more.

The Romans were not the people, however, to overlook the immense advantages of the site, and a century later, at the hands of Julius Cæsar, Corinth sprang again into existence.

The growth of the new city was very rapid, and Strabo gives us a wonderful description of its size when he visited it shortly after the restoration. We learn something also of the condition of the inhabitants from the Epistles of St. Paul. The Apostle lived here for many months with Aquila and Priscilla, "reasoning in the synagogue every sabbath," and exhorting men to strive not alone for the perishable crown cut from the Isthmian pine, but for one that was incorruptible and which all runners might win.

For more than four hundred years prosperity smiled on the Corinthians, and it seemed as if the fame of restored Corinth was likely to exceed that of the city Mummius had destroyed. But at the close of the fifth century, a foe more terrible than any who had previously visited it overran the country, and Corinth was swept away.


A remnant was left by the Goths of Alaric to be pillaged by the Normans from Sicily, but the town never regained its position. The great citadel passed from one hand to another, and in later times a new Corinth sprung up down by the sea at the head of the

gulf. Earthquakes completed the ruin of the once beautiful city, and now no trace of it is left save those seven weather-beaten old columns—

Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone rear'd by creatures of clay.*

A path leads from the site of the old temple towards the Acro Corinthus. At first it crosses some fields on the lower slopes of the mountain, and then winds up beneath the great cliffs to the entrance to the citadel. We found the massive wooden doors at the summit standing open, and on passing through them the whole surface of the ground appeared covered with ruined buildings. Tracks led in all directions, and we at once gave up all hope of finding our way to the famous fountain of Pirene ; moreover the extent of the ground is very considerable, and from end to end the rock must measure more than half a mile. The ruined buildings were of every date, and the remains of the more ancient had evidently been utilized for repairing the walls and providing barracks and stores in the days of the Turkish occupation. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere, and the great fortress was left desolate. A little chapel in which a light was burning, and which contained a bed, was the only sign we came across of anyone ever visiting the summit, but our guide told us that at certain seasons shepherds brought their flocks there to feed. The view from the highest point, 1,886 feet above the sea, must be left to the reader's imagination ; Greece

* *Siege of Corinth.*



seems to be spread out at your feet, and whichever way you turn the prospect is equally magnificent.

On descending from the Acro Corinthus we drove back to New Corinth, and as we still had two hours at our disposal we determined to visit the part of the Isthmus where the canal is being cut. Our driver there-upon put his horses at a gallop and we flew over the ruts, the holes, and the stones; through the streets of Corinth, where, at a corner, we narrowly escaped destruction; over the railway; across a field of wheat; and then on for a mile, till we suddenly pulled up within a foot of the cutting—our horses steaming, and our driver breathless with his exertions and not a little proud of his performance.

The canal commences at a point a mile and a half N.E. of Corinth and traverses the isthmus in a perfectly straight line to Kalamaki. The distance is a little more than three miles, and as there are no serious obstacles in the way, beyond some hard limestone rock which has to be cut through, the completion of the work is merely a question of time. The enterprise has engaged the attention of men ever since the days of Periander, and signs are still visible of Nero's work here in A.D. 67; but it has remained for the nineteenth century to carry out the scheme in its entirety, and in a short time we may expect to see the Morea severed from the rest of Greece.





ACRO CORINTHUS.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUNIUM.—MARATHON.—EUBOEÆ.

FROM Athens we determined to keep along the coast to the eastward till we reached Marathon Bay, and then to enter those narrow seas which divide Euboea from the mainland.

This last part of our project was not without its difficulties, for though there is nothing in these channels to hinder a steamer, their narrow limits—limits which at one point are reduced to a few feet—the currents and tides for which they are so remarkable, and the violent nature of the winds which sweep down from the mountains, present serious obstacles to a sailing yacht. Few ever think of attempting the passage; but those who do, find themselves amply repaid for any risk they have run.

Leaving the Peiræus, then, with a northerly breeze, we decided to go as far as Cape Colonna (Sunium), where, if the wind was too strong down the Mandri channel, we should be able to find shelter in a small bay.

The distance was only twenty-seven miles, but owing to a late start, the day was waning when we reached the Cape. Nothing, however, could have been more fortunate than the time of our arrival; and among the many scenes viewed from the yacht's deck, this seemed the fairest and most impressive of all. It was the evening of a fresh, spring day. To westward there was peace—peace in a sky flushed with red and yellow light, and over a long level tract of ocean studded with purple islands; but to eastward volumes of black cloud were sweeping up, and the puffs of wind that reached us round Sunium brought with them the moan of the sea and the sound of restless waves. High above our heads, and occupying a site which is, perhaps, finer than that of any temple in Greece, stood the thirteen remaining columns of "Tritonia's airy shrine," and beneath the temple were rough and rocky slopes clothed with myrtle, arbutus, and coarse grass.

The cliffs of Cape Colonna were within a few hundred yards of us, and so close were we to the shore, that the fluting on the columns of the temple was easily distinguishable with the naked eye. In ancient days these pure white columns served as a landmark to sailors beating up for the shores of Attica. They "gleamed along the waves," not only when waters danced in the sunlight, but when seas roared in the blackness of the storm, and the air was filled with spray-mist. They gleam so now; and they alone of all the ruins in Greece remain unstained by time. The fairness of these grand yet simple Doric columns is the fairness of glistening

spotless, marble, and there is no tinge of that rich yellow colour which we are wont to associate with the exterior of Greek temples. Whether they were purposely left uncoloured—and there seems reason for believing that they were so—or whether the salt in the sea air may account for their retaining their purity, we have no means of deciding; but for century after century this temple of Minerva has shone in its whiteness far out over the ocean, and while time and the trembling of the earth have shorn away column after column and rolled the severed drums down the steep, some are still left to speak of ancient days in a solitude which is never disturbed, and a silence which is rarely broken by the hum of men. Is there any cause, then, for wonder that Byron, Falconer, Campbell, and many other poets, though writers in prose, should have given some of their best lines to this spot? There are few scenes in Greece more interesting, there are none so simple yet so eloquent, and if you would see this temple of Athene to advantage, go round to it by sea. All writers have agreed that the sea is the point to view it from; and we saw it thus—saw it standing up against a black background of sullen angry clouds; with its columns and broken architrave sharply defined; white and pure as in the ages of the past, yet warmed and mellowed by declining rays, as the sun sank lower and lower, then dipped, and dipped beneath the waves.

Instead of anchoring for the night in Legrana bay, we determined to make use of the twilight and push on through the Mandri channel to Port Mandri on the

East coast. The channel is formed by the island of Makro Nisi, and, like its neighbour the Doro channel, is known for the violence of its northerly winds. It is not more than two miles in breadth by ten in length, but the presence of two sunken rocks, and the absence of all lights on this part of the coast, make this channel an undesirable place on a dark night.

As soon as we rounded Colonna, the south coast of Euboea with the snow-clad peak of Mount St. Elias, opened before us. The sea was running high in the channel and the wind, as we expected, was dead in our teeth, and it was evident that the seven miles we had to go to make Port Mandri would be turned into twenty before we reached our anchorage. As we crossed and recrossed the narrow channel, we were now and again close in to the modern Laurium—Ergasteria, and thus obtained a good view of this famous lead-mining district. For two thousand years, and more, man has been digging and delving here. Vast masses of slag have been poured out over the land for miles and miles; the features of the country have been changed, and the poisonous fumes from the smelting works have blighted and stamped out almost all vegetation. One gets so much into the habit, in travelling about a country like Greece, of letting the imagination run riot in the work of re-peopling and rebuilding—so accustomed to look at the fair and beautiful side of all around—that to be brought suddenly face to face with a representation of a bit of our Black country creates quite an unpleasant sensation. And Ergasteria has all the appurtenances

of a mining district—rows of squalid houses, a crowd of men striving and struggling in a busy work-a-day world, forests of chimneys, mountains of scorix, Nature blotted out and everything made hideous, and the sun shining through an ever-present pall of black smoke.

All this seems foreign to Greece, and yet it is not so. For centuries and centuries lead and silver mining has been carried out at Laurium on a gigantic scale.* Thousands of slaves toiled here in the old days when these mines were the chief source of the wealth of Athens, and the picture we have of life in the district then is appalling indeed. The fœtid fumes from the smelting works poisoned the air, and the slaves, toiling under their overbearing task-masters, sank down by hundreds in the deadly climate. Their places were filled up by capitalists, who, like Nicias, posed as pious men. More slaves were poured into the mines; more wealth into the coffers of the rich; men's lives were limited to a narrow span, and still for centuries the work went on and the mountains of scorix grew and grew like huge graves over the bodies of the fallen.† And what is it now? Two companies work the mines in the district; the one Greek, the other French. The first devotes its energies to re-smelting the scorix thrown out by the ancients, and exports annually, and

* It is not, I believe, known when these mines were first worked, but the period during which operations were most active seems to have been between 600 B.C. and the Peloponnesian war.

† An account of the Laurium mines will be found in that most charming of all books on Greece, Mahaffy's *Rambles and Studies in Greece*; also in Sandys' *An Easter Vacation in Greece*.

chiefly to England, between 8,000 and 10,000 tons of lead. The French company carries on regular mining operations, and their exports are about the same as those of the Greek company. The fumes from the smelting works are now, in part, carried away from Ergasteria by an enormous chimney, nearly a mile in length, which rises to the summit of a hill to the south of the port; but so poisonous is the air it emits, that no garden is possible within a radius of several miles.

By the time we reached the port of Mandri, darkness had closed in, and we had to pick up our berth as best we could. The so-called port is, in reality, no port at all. A few cottages on the shore mark the village of Mandri, and a small natural bay the port. The holding-ground we found good, but the north-easterly wind sent a heavy swell into the bay, and in this we rolled about till morning.

The next day we were under way early, bound for Marathon, but unfortunately there was little or no wind, and thus we were forced to lie in idleness in the Gulf of Petali. The surrounding scenery, especially on the Euboea side, was very fine, and the waters of the gulf were, moreover, enlivened by the presence of numbers of small Greek trading boats with their sails rigged in every kind of way. The distance we had to go was only thirty miles, but it was nearly 10 o'clock when we reached the great, silent, bay of Marathon and dropped anchor within two hundred yards of the shore. No lights or houses were visible anywhere, but the moon showed us the crescent-shaped, sandy beach.



STONE PINES AT MARATHON.

On the right, a thick belt of stone pines fringed the bay close to the water's edge, and on the left a long, level, tract of country stretched away into the black shadows of Mount Pentelicus. The lower slopes of the hills, which form a semi-circle round the plain, were shrouded in mist from the marshes, and the silence was only broken by the croaking of innumerable frogs and the plash of tiny waves breaking on smooth sand.

Pausanias tells us that "here every night one may hear horses neighing and men fighting," and he adds, that those who come here out of curiosity suffer, but that those who are brought here by accident the god's will not harm. And this superstition still lives, and this "region sacred to Hercules" is still, in the minds of the inhabitants, peopled, at night, by strange spirits. But the night, so far as we were concerned, was not disturbed, and as we sat on deck in the bright moonlight, no rustic armed with a ploughshare appeared floating in the mist, and no strange sound broke the stillness.

There is no need here to go back to the autumn afternoon of more than three and twenty centuries ago, when 10,000 Athenians advanced over the plain chanting their hymn of battle, and rushed at the vast army of the "chosen servant of Ormuzd." There is no need to people the bay of Marathon with a fleet of six hundred galleys, or its shore with a great concourse of armed men from all parts of Persia's dominions. This has been done, alike in the pages of Creasy as in the stanzas of Byron. But when we stand by that great

mound of earth on the south-west side of the plain which still marks the place where the Athenians who fell in the great fight were laid, it is well to remember that the day of Marathon was big with the fate of many nations. Those who fell in the battle were deified by their fellow countrymen; Athens had stood up, almost unaided, against the legions of the great king, and "through the whole epoch of her prosperity, through the long Olympiads of her decay, through centuries after her fall, Athens looked back on the day of Marathon as the brightest of her national existence." * And we too may look back to the day of Marathon, for the effects of the fight have been lasting. When Miltiades defeated the army of Darius, he did more than gain honour for his country. When the Medes and Persians under Datis and Artaphernes were driven to their ships, their invincibility became a thing of the past. On the day of Marathon the Eastern world received a check from which it never recovered, and from that afternoon, 490 B.C., the liberty of the Western world was assured.

And if we wander now over the plain of Marathon, is it much changed? Dykes have been cut; the marshes partially drained, and the land reclaimed for cultivation. But Marathon changes not. Time cannot change it. The plain turns from grey to green, and green to gold, as the crops are sown, spring up, and fall before the sickle; but time "spares grey Marathon," and thus the land

Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame.

* Creasy, *Fifteen Decisive Battles.*

The grey flowers of death bloom thickly over the plain and down by the shore where the long curve of yellow sand meets the blue sea ; the great stone-pines stand up with clean, red, stems, and as the wind whispers in their branches, it seems to murmur and to sigh, and as it sighs to sing of

Old unhappy far-off things
And battles long ago.

After a morning spent in wandering about the shores of Marathon we returned to the yacht, and at 1 o'clock weighed anchor.

And now it is time we directed our attention to Euboea. The island, which, during the middle ages was called Euripo or Negropont, is rather more than 100 miles in length. A range of high mountains runs from one end of it to the other, and some idea may be gathered of the grandeur of the scenery when the higher points of this range are enumerated. Mount Delphi, in the centre of the island, rises to a height of 5,780 ft. ; Mount St. Elias, in the south, to 4,840 ft. ; Mount Pyxaria, in the north, to 4,400 ft. ; and Mounts Kouroublia and Kandili, on the western coast, to 3,994 and 3,072 ft. respectively.

The greater part of the island is thickly wooded, and forests of enormous trees extend over the hills and up the slopes of the great mountains. Plane trees grow to a great size, and where the land is well watered the willows are magnificent. The oak and the elm also thrive here, and firs and pines, whose stems are nearly three feet in diameter, are often to be met with.

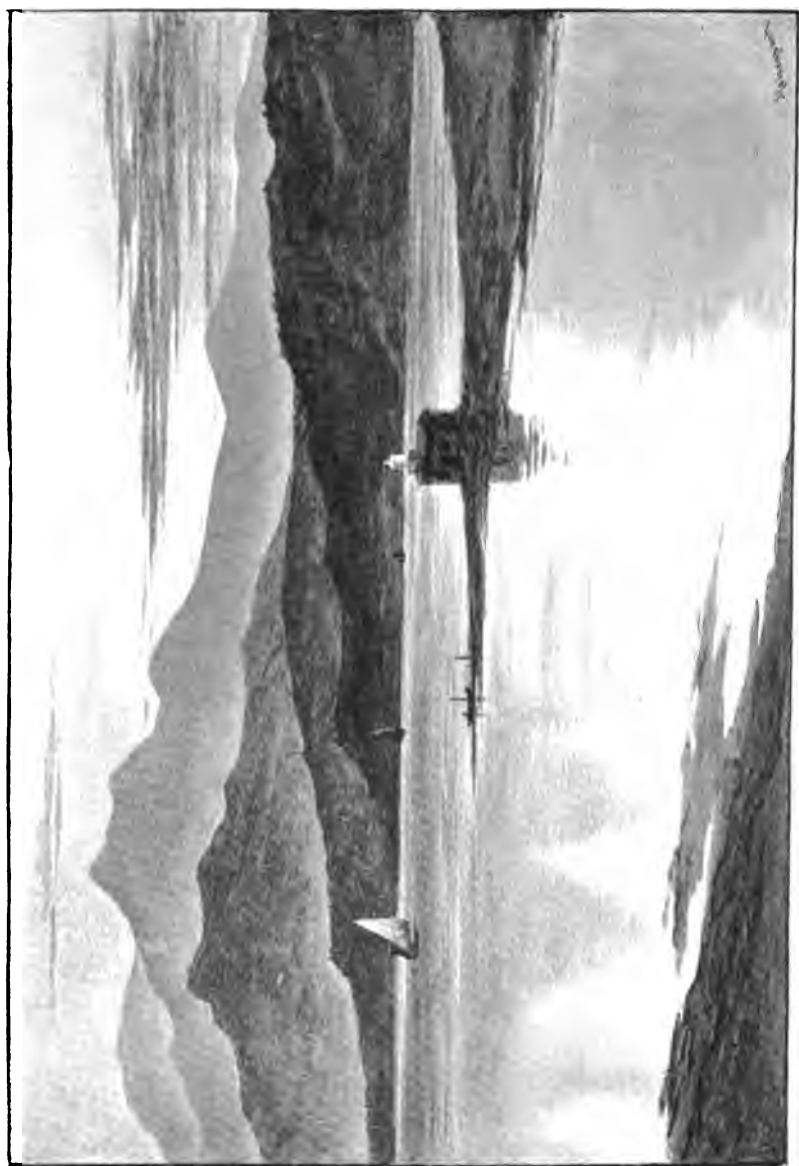
Only the smaller portion of the island is under cultivation. Vines are grown to a large extent, and a light, red wine forms one of the principal articles of trade. There are only two towns—Chalcis, the capital, and Karysto ; and the inhabitants, who number about 80,000, are mainly distributed in villages in various parts of the island.

But the point of greatest interest to a yachtsman, is the series of narrow channels separating Euboea from the mainland. These channels are five in number, and throughout their length—a distance of upwards of 130 miles—the scenery is not only beautiful but, occasionally, grand in the extreme.

The first or Euripo channel, may be said to commence at Cape Marathon. Here the Gulf of Petali comes to an end, and the distance between Euboea and the main is suddenly reduced to a little over two miles.

We entered this channel with a stiff breeze from the N.E., and threading our way through the Stoura and Berdougí islets which are grouped at the mouth, were soon bowling along at ten knots. For nearly two hours we held the wind, and as we lay well over to the breeze, the water bubbled in and out of the scuppers, and the rigging set up that humming sound which is always a part of sailing close-hauled.

When opposite the village of Eretri on the Euboean coast, we suddenly ran out of the wind ; fifty yards astern the sea was in a condition of ferment, but the yacht was on a level keel, with sails flapping. The winds in these channels are often very perplexing, for after blowing



THE ENTRANCE TO THE STENO CHANNEL.

hard from one direction they will drop, and then blow hard from another. The sudden gusts which sweep down from the mountains with terrific force are also to be guarded against. On one occasion when we were sailing peacefully along, a gust caught us, laid us right over without any warning, and carried away the weather rope of our jib.

Late in the afternoon we were close to Oropos, a little village on the mainland embowered in arbores and cypresses, and situated at the water's edge. A plain, almost the whole of which is under cultivation, stretches inland here for a considerable distance, and out of this plain, hills covered, apparently, with fine turf, and dotted over with trees, rise one above the other.

We were now nearing the end of the Euripo channel. From Cape Marathon to the entrance to the Steno channel, as the next narrows are called, is only thirty-five miles, and we anchored here just before dark.

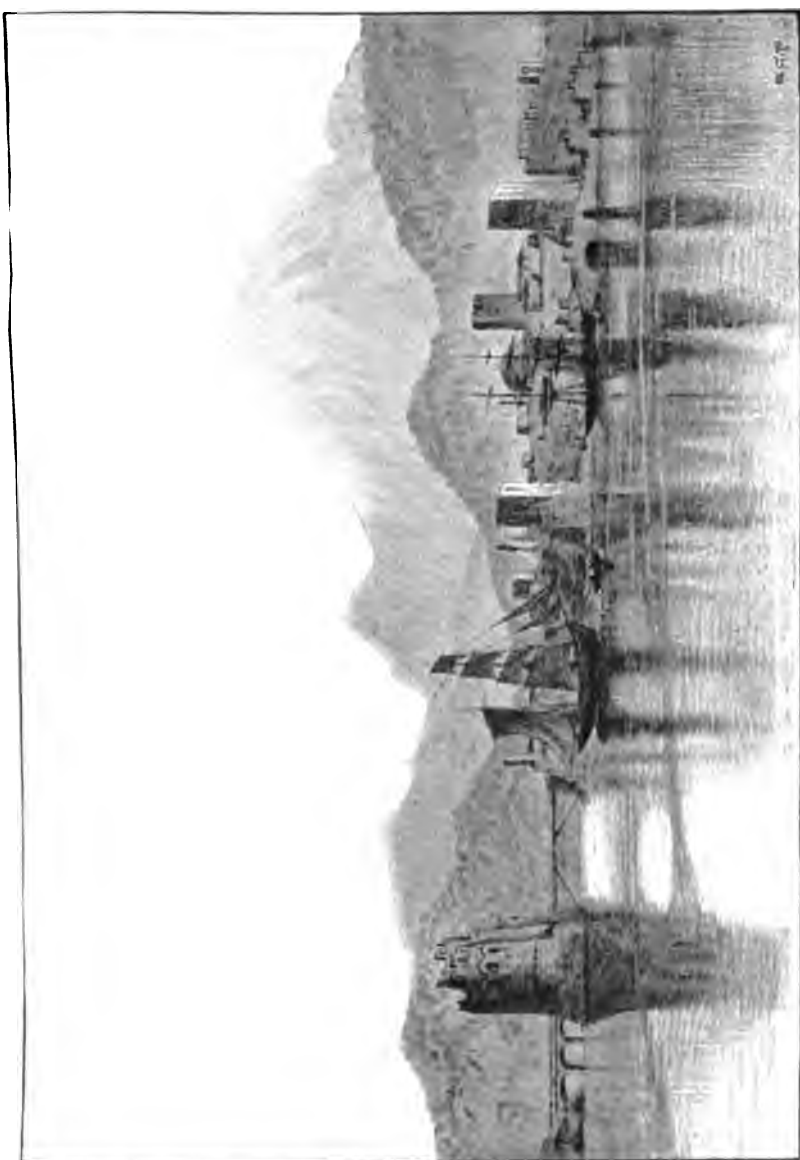
The following morning we were on deck early, as we were anxious to enter the narrows before the wind got up. It frequently happens that the wind which has brought you up to the entrance to this channel does not blow home, and that a stiff breeze is experienced from the northward. The channel is so narrow that beating is impossible, and on this account it is often necessary to revert to towing, or even warping, to get on at all. Our launch was too light to be of much use towing, but we had her out and steam up soon after dawn, and with our two boats to help we hoped to avoid running aground.

The entrance to the Steno channel is marked on the Euboea side by an old circular Venetian fort, called the Burj, and on the main by a small lighthouse situated at the end of a long spit of yellow sand, the distance between these two points being two and a half cables. A buoy marks the fathom line on the shallows, but otherwise the colour of the water is the best guide. The difficulty we had been prepared for, we were not called upon to meet; not a breath was stirring, and mountains, trees, and sky were reflected in the water as one sometimes sees them on the placid surface of a Swiss lake. When the wind got up at last, it was in our favour, and we were thus able to pass through the narrows with little trouble.

The Steno channel resembles a broad canal. It is bounded on either side by bare uninteresting-looking hills, the distance from the Burj to Chalcis being rather more than three miles. Owing to the way in which the channel winds in and out among the hills, you do not sight Chalcis till you have rounded the last corner. Then you enter a circular basin three quarters of a mile in breadth; the town lies right in front of you, and it seems as though you could get no further for no outlet is visible.

The appearance of Chalcis is most striking, and Mount Delphi, which rises to a height of 5,730 feet immediately behind the town, adds much to the effect. Viewed from the port, Chalcis seems to be entirely surrounded by an elaborate system of fortifications, above which the dome of a mosque, a ruined minaret, or the dark red roofs of a few houses are alone visible. The walls which

CHALCIS





encircle the place are of a rich yellow colour, and their ruined battlements, flanking towers, intricate gateways, and generally complicated involution give them a most picturesque appearance.

The greater part of the fortifications are Venetian in character, and numerous winged lions of St. Mark carved upon great slabs of white marble and let into the walls, show at once who the builders must have been. In the days of her prosperity and strength, and with her love of war and adventure, Venice carried her commerce all over the *Ægean*, and the island of *Euboea*, which she became possessed of on the dismemberment of the Eastern Empire, was only one of her many strongholds. She lost *Chalcis*, however, to the Turks in 1470, in spite of all she had done to make the place impregnable, and though two centuries later she laid siege to it she was never able to recover it again.

Chalcis is a quaint, quiet, picturesque town with narrow, winding streets, and a considerable bazaar. Among the six thousand inhabitants forming the population many races are to be found—Greek islanders, Albanians, Turks, and Jews. The Turks are dying out, but there are still a few Jews, and I believe *Chalcis* to be one of the only places in Greece where Jews are to be found. The town is divided into two parts, that without and that within the walls. In both there is much to delight the heart of the artist and the traveller, but few people ever come here.

Chalcis is far more like a Turkish than a Greek town, and this characteristic is accentuated by two exceedingly

interesting mosques. The minarets with the Imams' galleries, have been destroyed in both cases, and one of the mosques is now used as a Greek church and the other as a hospital. I determined to make a sketch of this last, and having borrowed a chair from a neighbouring house, sat down for the purpose. In a few moments I was surrounded by a crowd of some thirty men and boys, who evinced the greatest interest in my proceedings. The extraordinary civility of many members of this crowd contrasted curiously with their villainous appearance, and one or two heavily-armed individuals kindly constituted themselves into a police, and worked hard to keep a gangway open so that I could see my subject.

As the sketch grew, so the excitement of the crowd grew too, each touch evoking a number of comments, till at last I became aware that something I had done, or left undone, had displeased them. For some time I could not discover what this was, but at length one of the crowd took me by the arm and led me a few yards away from where I had been sitting, and then pointed. The cause of all the excitement was evident in a moment, and I returned to my sketch and altered it without delay. At once there was a loud burst of applause. I had previously omitted a large crescent on the top of the dome—the only crescent left in Chalcis—but when this was put in, the sketch was finished, and the crowd broke up as though they had been witnessing a performance by a street acrobat.

There is one point in connection with the channel at

Chalcis which is of no ordinary interest, and I will, therefore, turn to it.

The channel here measures 120 feet in breadth, but only a small part of it is navigable for ships, or even boats. An old Venetian fort stands on a rock in the middle of the channel, being connected with the mainland by a stone bridge of three small arches, and with Chalcis by an iron swing-bridge. The water under the stone bridge is only a few inches in depth, but under the iron bridge it is rather more than eighteen feet, and it is through this last-named opening, therefore, that vessels alone can pass.

The actual water-way measures thirty-three feet across, and though this allows but little spare room, there would be no difficulty in getting a sailing-vessel through were it not for those tides which have made Euripus bridge, as it is usually called, so remarkable.

For centuries and centuries—long, indeed, before the commencement of the Christian era—these tides have been a puzzle to mankind, and they seem, after a careful series of observations, carried out during many years by an English naval officer resident in Chalcis,* to be only indirectly subject to tidal laws.

We are accustomed to watch the rise and fall of the tides on our coasts, and we know that they are governed by laws which are immutable; we have only to turn to an almanac, and we find the time of high water at London Bridge on any day of the year reduced to minutes; but at Euripus bridge the actual turn of the

* Admiral Mansell.

tide cannot be foretold with any degree of accuracy, and though it seems that the tides here must be subject to the same influences as the tides of the wider ocean, we must look elsewhere than to the moon's attraction if we are to account in any way for their extraordinary irregularities.

Every child knows that there are two ebbs and two flows in the course of the twenty-four hours, but the tides at Euripus bridge have been known to change five times in the same period, while there are records of their having done so as often as ten and twelve times in the course of a day, though how far these last are reliable I will not venture to say. Slack water at the Euripus rarely lasts more than four or five minutes and never more than ten. As soon as the tide turns, the current changes almost at once, and the water rushes through the narrow passage like a river in flood time.

The rapidity of the current varies at different seasons of the year. During the spring tides it occasionally runs at seven miles an hour, while during the neaps its speed often falls to less than a mile an hour, and now and then, according to Admiral Mansell, little tidal movement is noticeable at all. The periods of irregularity occur generally twice in a moon, and continue for two or three days during the first and last quarters, but the irregularities are also largely influenced by the winds. The rise at the bridge varies from a few inches during the neaps to about three feet or less during the springs; but with a strong wind from the south, or when a southerly gale has been blowing, the water has

suddenly risen to a height of six feet above its normal level and flooded all the lower parts of the town, the current at the same time running with a rapidity of over eight miles an hour.

The water is, so to speak, banked up on that side of the bridge upon which, for the moment, the tide is setting, and thus after the current has been running for about three hours, say from the north, it is high water on the north and low on the south. The same holds good when the flow is the other way; but it is a curious fact that the spring rise on the south is always lower than on the north.*

Our passage of the channel proved rather exciting. We were warned that slack water would occur about 8 o'clock in the morning, when the tide would turn and the current be running to the northward, and we therefore determined to be prepared to start as soon as the flag was hoisted to show the bridge was open. From where we were anchored we had about 250 yards to go to reach the bridge, and we therefore had the foresail and headsails set and the cutter and dinghy out with the tow-rope so as to lose no time when the opportunity arrived. The launch we kept under steam astern in case she should be required, and as soon as the bridge was open we towed up to within 150 yards of the channel.

Just, however, as we were getting the yacht's head straight for the run through, the man in charge of the bridge called out that it was not safe to attempt the passage, though why, we did not know. We had not

* See *The Mediterranean Pilot*, vol. iv., p. 62.

begun to feel the current, though we were so close to the bridge, but, current or no current, our chance of getting through was very soon balked by the bridge being closed, and there was, therefore, nothing for it but to let go. On making inquiries, we found that the current was not running through fairly, but was setting on to a sunken rock lying beneath the water on the north side of the channel, and that a small steamer, which had just passed through, had had a narrow escape of going aground.* At this time the current was running at from three to four knots, and there appeared every probability of our being delayed till the next tide. However, a man who had been accustomed to take vessels through, offered to act as pilot, if we waited till 11 A.M., when the current would be running true. To this we agreed, and at the hour named weighed anchor, and with the launch and cutter towing moved slowly ahead. As we neared the bridge, however, the pilot's nerve failed him, and he shouted "No good; can't go through"; the fact being that the wind, which was dead ahead, had freshened and frightened him. Matters looked awkward for a moment, as we were already in the current, but just as we were going to let go again the pilot regained his nerve and said, "Yes; can go through." The next instant the current took us fairly, and we glided through the narrow channel. Now, however, came the ticklish part of the undertaking, for the

* This rock lies about twenty feet north of the bridge, and in going through from the south, it is advisable to keep as much as possible to the starboard side, as the rock has only about twelve feet of water on it.

difficulty was to prevent the yacht getting broadside on to the stream, all the way she had on her being due to the force of the current. The launch steamed away vigorously, but with small effect, and, before we could stop her, the yacht twisted right round. A warp was at once got out and made fast to a vessel anchored below us, and for half an hour all hands had to work hard to prevent the yacht from going aground. As if to warn us of what we might expect, three vessels were lying hard and fast on the rocks, not fifty yards off, but by degrees we managed to get the yacht's head to the stream, and then we dropped slowly astern, and were almost immediately out of danger.

We were now in the Talanta channel, which extends from Chalcis to the Lithada Islands, a distance of fifty miles. The breadth of this channel varies from six to twelve miles, and the scenery, throughout its whole length, is quite equal to anything in either Norway or Switzerland. The northern part of Euboea is far more beautiful than the south, and, being anxious to see something of the country, we anchored that night in Politica Bay, eight miles from Chalcis.

The village of Politica stands about a mile from the sea, and consists of about forty houses, grouped round a tall Venetian tower. In this neighbourhood the country resembles a garden. Turf, as soft as velvet, covers the ground, and over it are spread shrubberies, composed of lentisk, myrtle, oleander, and Mediterranean heath. Here and there are groups of willows, standing in thick masses of maiden-hair fern, and further inland pine

woods extend over the hills for many miles. But it is among the mountains that the most beautiful scenery is to be found, and Euboea here is like a great natural park. Ascending the mountains behind Politica, and passing the village of Kaminitza, we entered woods composed of plane trees of great size, and when, at an altitude of 8,000 feet, the track struck the road from Chalcis to Achmet-Aga, the eastern coast of the island lay beneath us. The road now took us through a series of magnificent gorges, the woods on either hand being composed of oak, pine, arbutus, and ilex. Peak after peak rose in front of us, and ever and anon the road crossed and recrossed a rushing brook. The air was filled with the scent of cistus bushes and various aromatic shrubs, and bees were busy among the flowers. The sun was hot, but through the branches of the trees, where the shade was deep and cool, came the sparkle of the sea.

Before leaving Politica, we invited several of the villagers to bring their children off to the yacht. This gave great satisfaction, and we had quite a large party on board. Many of those who came spoke most affectionately of Mr. Noel, an Englishman, who owns a large property on the island, and who appears to be looked upon as a father of the people.

Sailing northward through the Talanta channel, the scenery becomes grander every hour. Midway in the channel, the coast of Euboea is very precipitous, and the great grey cliffs of Kouroublia and Kandili, and some four or five other peaks, rise sheer out of the water to

heights ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 feet. When close to these cliffs, and when the peaks above look as if they would fall on you, you may heave the lead but you will not touch bottom at 200 fathoms: the cliffs rear themselves up skywards, but they spring from unknown depths, and from chasms, where the water is black and motionless, and where the light of the sun never penetrates.

The Talanta channel ends at the Lithada Islands, where the entrance into the Oreos channel is reduced to about a mile in width. Here one has, so to speak, to turn a corner, and from steering W.N.W., to steer N.E. The gulf of Stylida—close to the southern shores of which is the famous pass of Thermopylæ—opens on the port hand, and the scenery seems to grow even more magnificent. The Euboea coast is, however, less fine here, and, though it is not altogether lacking in grandeur, the absence of trees detracts materially from its beauty.

That night we anchored in Gardiki Bay, on the coast of Thessaly, the whole of the country round—the richest, perhaps, in all Greece—being covered with corn and barley. The next morning we were awakened rather early. The yacht was under weigh soon after 6 o'clock, with a light air, but this unfortunately dropped, and a boat had to be lowered to tow the yacht further away from the shore. It soon, however, became evident that we had been caught by the current which runs out of the Talanta channel, and sets on to this part of the coast, as we began to go slowly astern, taking the boat with us.

The depth of water would not allow of our anchoring, and though a second boat was lowered, and everybody pulled as hard as they could, the yacht continued to drift, till at length she was aground not two yards from the shore. Fortunately for us there was no swell, and the bottom, though hard, was not rocky, otherwise the result might have been serious. For a long while we did not move, in spite of all our efforts, but at length a kedge was got out, and dropped in over fifty fathoms, and then, by dint of much punting, pulling, and working at the capstan, we drew off in safety.

I need not trouble the reader with a description of the Oreos channel. It is terminated, like the channels already noticed, by a narrow passage, made narrower by the island of Argiro, and its whole length is about eighteen miles.

At Argiro we entered the Trikeri channel, and once more felt the heavy roll of the open sea. The Etesian winds were blowing strongly, and the air was so thick that the great group of the Thessalian Islands was only dimly visible. Turning to get one more glimpse of Euboea ere the sun set, the island had disappeared; its smooth and peaceful channels were realities to us no longer, but they live as happy recollections.



CHAPTER IX.

MOUNT ATHOS.—RUSSICO.—CARYES.

THE sea is never very pleasant when the water is the colour of lead, and your range of vision is limited to a few yards, when a fog clings close to the waves, and the air is chill and damp. Yet this was what we found when we came on deck in the morning hoping to get a view of Mount Athos. The wind had been fair all night, and the log showed us we must be nearing the gulf of Monte Santo, but we could see nothing, nothing but a succession of heavy swell-waves rolling towards us one after the other out of the fog, and passing silently by us on their way landward. It wanted no stretch of imagination to fancy oneself in the English Channel. The wind had backed to the eastward, and east wind is disagreeable all the world over; our sails were saturated with moisture; the decks were sloppy; and it was bitterly cold. Now and then the fog lifted a little, and for a minute or two there seemed a chance of its clearing away, but after a while it closed on us again, thicker than before, folding us in its chill embrace, and making everything cold and clammy to the touch.

But the sun won the day in the end and the fog began to rise slowly off the sea, and there, sure enough, not six miles distant, was the land of Athos. It was some time before the victory was complete, for the mists hung provokingly low down on the hill-sides, but by degrees they rolled higher and higher up the slopes, till at last there stood out before us the great peak in which the peninsula terminates—a giant of solid marble, rearing itself out of the water to a height of 6,849 feet.

Mount Athos, Monte Santo, or Hagion Oros as it is also called, is the most easterly of those three peninsulas which jut out into the *Ægean* from the south coast of Macedonia, and though the name, properly speaking, is confined to the great peak I have just mentioned, it is also used with reference to the country generally. From end to-end the peninsula measures forty miles, with a mean breadth of about four miles; and throughout its whole length runs a chain of hills clothed with shrubs and evergreens, and, in many places, with magnificent trees. The coast-line is precipitous, especially to the southward, and the scenery of the country is almost unrivalled in beauty.

But the beauty of this peninsula is not its only attraction, for if we glance at the past history and present condition of Athos we shall find that few countries surpass it in interest.

Mount Athos is inhabited solely by monks and by workmen employed by the monks in cultivating the soil. The conditions of life in the country are as strange as they are altogether without parallel anywhere in the

world, and every phase of monastic life can here be studied in perfect completeness, from the solitary hermit in his lonely cell to the wealthy monastery with its crowded courts and its hosts of retainers. The country is the property of twenty great monasteries which are practically bound together into an independent State, having its own Government, making its own laws, carrying on its own trade, and maintaining its own soldiers; a State, too, possessing this additional peculiarity, that its members are all of one sex, for in the whole length and breadth of the land there are no women, and no woman is ever allowed to set foot in the country. To such a length is this carried, that the monasteries keep a number of soldiers whose duty it is not only to expel women, but also to destroy all animals of the female sex, and thus, though, for instance, eggs are occasionally procurable, they are imported; there are cocks in Athos, but no hens.

How long Athos has been inhabited solely by monks it is impossible to say, or even to fix the date when many of the existing monasteries were established. We have evidence of there being hermits in the peninsula as far back as the ninth century, for they are mentioned in the reign of Basil the Macedonian (A.D. 885), and we know that in the middle of the tenth century the Emperor Nicephorus Phocas, acting upon the advice of Athanasius of Athos, caused the hermits to be collected into monasteries; but previous to these times we have nothing really authentic, and the rest must be left to conjecture.

Some of the most ancient monasteries, it is true, claim to have been founded by Constantine, while others date back to the time of Theodosius the Great. The monks of these houses are always ready to relate curious legends about their founders, or even to show you the signatures of these great men in their wonderful old manuscripts, but all they tell you cannot be taken as reliable evidence.

Yet if we look at the history of monachism in other countries, we find facts which lead us to believe that in all probability monks and monasteries existed in Athos long before the time when we first hear of them there.

Early in the third century we know that many in the East shut themselves up from the world, and underwent a self-imposed discipline of extraordinary rigour; but these were all eremites or hermits living in solitary cells, and there is no mention of monasteries till fully a century later. In Lower Egypt at this date the monks numbered many thousands, and some few appear to have given up their solitary life, and formed "retreats" where three or four lived together. From this, no doubt, sprang the *laura* or cluster of cells which, in course of time, was still further developed into an association of monks living together under one roof.

Irrespective, however, of the monks who existed in this way in Egypt, Jerome speaks of multitudes of monks in India, Persia, and Ethiopia, and we know that the islands of the Adriatic and Tuscan Seas were also crowded with them. In the fourth century Athanasius carried monachism into Rome; Eusebius did the same

in Northern Italy ; Ambrose in Milan ; and somewhat later, Cassian in the south of France. In those early days there was a tendency to escape from the world for the purpose of practising the severest asceticism, and it appears unlikely that the advantages offered by the peninsula of Athos would have been overlooked. There, if anywhere, men might live lives of perfect and uninterrupted solitude, free from all external influences ; the position was an isolated one, the chances of being interfered with were remote ; the scenery and climate perfect, and the soil most fertile. But there is another fact pointing to the possibility of monks inhabiting Athos in early times. Monachism, as we know, spread very rapidly from Syria and Egypt to the westward, and when great numbers of monks fled from those countries to escape the flood of Mahomedanism, it appears probable that some at least found their way to Athos. If this was so, it may at first seem strange that we have no reliable records left to go by, as in the case of the monks who migrated to Western Europe ; but we must remember that these last had among them men of great energy and ability, in whose hands monachism shook itself free from the conditions under which it had previously existed. In Western Europe work was imperative, and contact with the world acted as a stimulus. The monks who settled in Athos experienced none of this ; they came from a land where their lives had been lives of idleness, and they reached another where there were no incentives to work. In the East the climate had made work of any kind onerous, and in Athos life

was rendered comparatively so easy that the first settlers probably deteriorated, and thus left no record behind them.

However this may be, if we throw all speculation overboard and retain only those facts for which we have chapter and verse, we are still struck by the extraordinary length of time the monks have been able to retain their hold on the peninsula. Out of the twenty principal monasteries we can trace the history of four, namely those of Vatopedi, Lavra, Xeropotamu, and Iveron, through a period of nearly ten centuries. Yet it must not be supposed that the long life they have enjoyed is due to immunity from attack, for the country has over and over again been laid waste by fire and sword. The Saracens overran it more than once, and when Constantinople was taken by the Latins, in 1203-4, Athos was not suffered to escape persecution. Several of the monasteries were, at that time, burnt to the ground; the monks were tortured and afterwards murdered in great numbers, and many of their works of art were stolen or destroyed. In the sixteenth century they were again put to the sword, this time by Sultan Solyman; but they recovered and rebuilt their monasteries, and thus they have remained for century after century the sole occupants of a land from which they have never, even for a time, been expelled.

The uninterrupted connection of monks with Athos appears all the more extraordinary when we consider that their creed has been foreign to that of the nations around them. Members of the Greek Church them-

selves, we find them not only under the Latins, but what is still more curious, existing for upwards of four hundred years as dependents of Mahomedans. The monks have generally conducted their affairs with consummate skill, and at the time when every effort was being made to unite the Eastern and Western Churches in the defence of Constantinople, they were far-sighted enough to make terms with Amurath, and agreed to submit to Turkish rule on consideration of their privileges being respected. To this day the monasteries continue to pay tribute to the Sultan, just as they did when the Turks came to Constantinople in 1453, and in spite of the many changes which have passed over Eastern Europe in the last five centuries the monks have remained, for the most part, undisturbed.

By nature every Greek is more or less a politician, and the monks, as Greeks, have never been able to throw off all interest in the affairs of the outside world. This predilection for politics has, on more than one occasion, involved them in serious trouble, and in the early days of the War of Independence the monks of Athos sided with the Hetairists. They joined the revolt of the Free Villages; they supported a band of seven hundred soldiers; and armed about two thousand of their own number. As soon, however, as they discovered that the Hetairia was not supported by Russia, they brought their diplomacy into play and made overtures to Aboulabad. But they paid dearly for the venture. An amnesty was promised them on condition

of their handing over all their arms, and at the same time agreeing to pay the Sultan a tribute of two million and a half piastres and to admit a Turkish garrison. For nine years they thus found themselves compelled to support an army of 8,000 Ottoman troops, and so severely did this press upon their resources that many of the monasteries were brought to the verge of ruin. The peninsula still bears traces of the effect of this occupation in the stumps of thousands of giant trees, cut down to raise money, but the monasteries have long since recovered.

As the southern extremity of the peninsula is approached the appearance of the great peak is most majestic. We often speak of mountains being so and so many feet above the sea; but it is not often we can stand beneath cliffs rising straight up out of the waves to a height four times greater than the Rock of Gibraltar. Mount Athos proper, as I have already said, is of white marble, toned, like the Greek temples, to a rich yellow colour. Its steep and rugged face is broken into chasms and crevasses, while its shoulders are tree-covered and patches of dark firs stand out boldly against the marble precipices. High up above where the trees end, a white mantle of snow covers the golden stones, and when the sun gets low down on the horizon the shadow of the Sacred Mountain falls athwart Lemnos, and the great peak is visible, rosy red, from the far off plain of Troy. Perched in all kinds of inaccessible places are numerous Sketes, or communities of monks, but here there are no monasteries, for these fringe the

shores of the peninsula on the eastern and western coasts.

We had with us only the general chart of this part of the Levant, the large scale sheets having accidentally been left behind. This somewhat complicated matters, as we were not sure of being able to find a good berth for the yacht. Our plans were these; to go ashore at one of the principal monasteries, sending the yacht up the gulf to anchor behind the Moulari Islands; then to traverse the greater part of the peninsula, visiting some of the monasteries on the way, and trusting to the hospitality of the monks for shelter at night times. It would be quite easy to cruise round the coast and visit the monasteries in that way; but you would come away with a very poor knowledge of Mount Athos. If you wish to realise the life the inhabitants lead, you must not be satisfied with the monasteries alone; you must travel through the exquisitely beautiful country; you must wander through the great woods and along the narrow paths; you must put yourself in the place of the monks themselves, and endeavour to realise their life and to breathe their air, and then, though your time be limited, you may learn a little about one of the strangest countries in the world.

The first monasteries we noticed on approaching the west coast were those of St. Paul, in a wooded ravine some way inland, and St. Gregory, close to the beach. We determined, however, to pass these by and go farther on to Simopetra, which is situated on the summit of an isolated rock upwards of 900 feet above the sea. Its

position reminded us of those famous monasteries of Meteora; but while debating whether we should go in here, we caught sight of what, at first, appeared to be a town of considerable dimensions. This was the great Russico, or St. Pantaleemon, the largest monastery on the western coast, and we soon decided to sail towards it.

We had with us no letter from the Archimandrite of Constantinople, and when we arrived at Russico three Turkish soldiers on the pier refused to allow us to go up to the monastery. It was Sunday, and a considerable crowd of monks had come down to look at the yacht and enjoy the sight of fresh faces. These all received us as old friends, and seemed quite pleased to see us; but the Turks stood some way off and were evidently determined to make themselves disagreeable. We showed them our passports emblazoned with endless visées, we offered them cigarettes, we endeavoured to talk them round, and we tried the effect of baksheesh. They would have none of it, and at one time it appeared as if we should have to return to the yacht defeated. We laboured under the disadvantage of not being able to talk Turkish, and all we had to say had first to be told Julio in English, who then translated it into Greek for a monk, who again re-translated it into Turkish for the soldiers. Affairs looked at their worst, and the crowd of monks had one by one gone off to the monastery, when two brethren, better dressed than the rest, appeared on the scene. One of these, to our surprise, ordered the soldiers off the pier. Surely, we thought, this must be a man in authority, and we quickly sent Julio to ask

whether he would put matters right for us. We had no permit, but it was finally arranged that Julio should be allowed to go over the mountains to the village of Caryes, taking our passports with him, and there get a properly executed permit from the Turkish caimacan. As this meant a delay of some hours, there was nothing to be done but to go back to the yacht and await Julio's return.

While we had been thus engaged, our boat's crew, with an eye to business, had secured the services of a monk who volunteered to pilot the yacht to the head of the gulf. He had been a sailor in his time and was once in Liverpool, but his piloting was not of the best, for the next day he ran the yacht on the rocks, though luckily without damaging her. The only words of English Gabriel the pilot knew, and on which he plumed himself not a little, were "Plenty," and "By-and-bye": so when the Captain asked whether there was water enough, he kept saying "plenty, plenty," and presently when the Captain shouted "The yacht's aground," Gabriel brought in the rest of his vocabulary and continued to repeat "By-and-bye, by-and-bye."

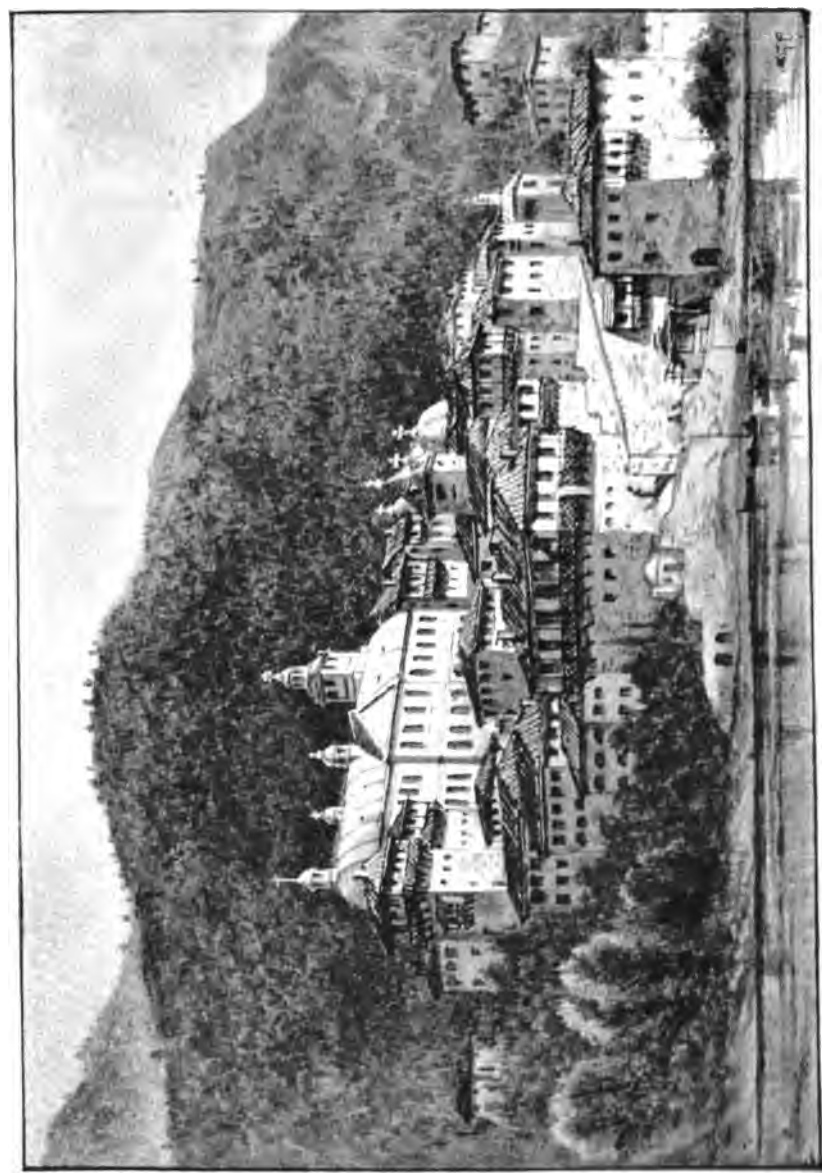
Late at night Julio returned from Caryes with a permit and the caimacan's apologies for the soldiers' behaviour to us, and the next morning early we went ashore.

Like all the great monasteries in Athos, Russico can be entered only by one great portal, and here as elsewhere the outside walls were evidently constructed with a view to defence; the windows are all high up from

the ground, and the doors open only into the courtyards. Outside the monastery proper are numerous store-houses and other buildings, for Russico employs a large number of workmen in cultivating the land and in carrying on a small export and import trade ; but these buildings, though extensive, are insignificant compared to those of the monastery. On passing through the massive gates you enter the principal courtyard, and find yourself surrounded by buildings of all kinds. Many of these are of large size, and among them are two churches, each surmounted by numerous cupolas, having on their summits large and elaborate crosses richly gilt and ornamented with coloured glass. But the buildings of Russico, though quaint, are not picturesque, for the walls are all white-washed, and many of the roofs, which are of zinc, are painted bright emerald green.

The monastery is the head-quarters of the Russians in the peninsula, and the Greek monks elsewhere tell you strange stories of the aggressive character of Russico. Unlike the other monasteries, Russico has quite a busy air, and we found the great paved courtyards crowded with monks and work-people. A small trading vessel had arrived the night before from the Black Sea, and Russian sailors were busy bringing in bales of various goods ; all was life and movement, and there was none of that sleepy indolence we are in the habit of associating with monastic institutions.

As soon as we entered the gates, two monks volunteered to conduct us to the Egoumenos, or head of the monastery, and after traversing several courts and



MOUNT ATHOS.—RUSSICO.

ascending many flights of stone steps we were shown into a large and well-furnished room. The floor was highly polished and covered with coloured rugs; the walls were hung with chromo-lithographs, prints of saints, and photographs of Czars and Princes; and at the far end of the room stood some sofas and arm-chairs and a round table with a vase of flowers on it. Presently the door opened and the Egoumenos entered, followed by two monks bearing preserved strawberries and glasses of anisette on silver trays. The Head of Russico was a tall fine-looking man of commanding appearance, dressed like the other monks in long black robes and the usual tall black cap made of hard felt. He received us most courteously, and we had some interesting conversation with him, carried on through Julio, who sat beside him on one of the sofas. He told us that Russico was founded originally by Saint Lazarus, of Servia, in the tenth century, and dedicated to St. Pantaleemon, but that many of the present buildings were the work of Catherine I. of Russia, and others only dated back to the beginning of this century. There were, he said, over four hundred monks living within the walls, and the monastery was employing over 1,000 workmen in making additions to the buildings, cultivating the ground, and establishing a branch house in the north of the peninsula. The monks were nearly all Russians, only about twenty being Greeks, and for this reason the services in one of the churches of Russico were read in Slavonic, and in the other in Greek.

The position of Egoumenos in a monastery of such

prodigious dimensions can be no sinecure, for besides the administration of the monastic funds, he is responsible for the maintenance of order, the employment of the labourers who have to be housed, paid, and fed, the export and import of goods, the cultivation of the ground, and the organization of the establishment generally. The affairs of the country, in which all the monasteries have a voice, are conducted by a Synod sitting at Caryes, and to this I will refer presently; but of the head men in Athos, none have a wider authority than the ruler of Russico, for the monks under the roof of his monastery do not represent a third of those who look to him as their leader in the peninsula.

Before bidding us good-bye the Egoumenos kindly offered to provide us with mules to take us to Caryes, and directed a monk and a boy to go with us as guides. While the animals were being got ready we visited some of the buildings. The interior of the principal church is marred by white-wash, and though the iconostasis is richly ornamented and some of the pictures on the walls are interesting, the building is disappointing, for it lacks all architectural beauty, and in appearance is more that of a long narrow room with stalls round it than a church. The refectory is very large and capable of accommodating fully three hundred monks, but here again there is nothing to interest one artistically, and Russico from an antiquarian point of view is unattractive.

To whatever part of the monastery we were taken, order, activity, and a certain spirit of enterprise were

discernible, and in this Russico differed altogether from the other monasteries we visited. In the library ancient books and MSS. were the exception, and the monks evidently made use of the modern works with which the shelves were filled. Just outside the courtyard we came across a small shop, where we made some purchases, and where the stock-in-trade ranged from bibles and icons to eatables and articles of apparel; monks stood behind the counters, and trade on the morning of our visit was evidently brisk. It was curious afterwards to contrast the interior of other monasteries with the business air of Russico, and if the members of most of the great institutions in Athos lead indolent lives, the monks of St. Pantaleemon do not appear to waste their time.

On leaving Russico we travelled slowly up a narrow winding path bordered on either side by bay, ilex, and arbutus bushes, and very soon the great monastery lay a thousand feet beneath us. We had been furnished with three mules. Two of these were used as baggage animals, and the third had been provided with a comfortable saddle. The monk who had been told off to act as our guide, and who remained with us during the whole of our stay in the country, was a Greek, by name Hilarion. He was a quiet, delicate-looking man, with long brown hair falling on his shoulders, and a beard which reached to his waist. His clothes were little better than rags, and his cloak had long since turned from black to rusty brown. Even his tall cap was battered in on one side; but in spite of his ragged

appearance he had a taking manner, and we became great friends. He told us he had been a caloyer of Russico for over twenty years, and that he was thirty-seven years old, though he looked fifty.

The boy who led the saddle-mule was a cheery, bright-faced little fellow of fourteen, who had come the whole way from Joaninna on foot with his father to get work for the summer at Russico. He was dressed in a black woollen tunic reaching to his knees and secured round his waist by a strap, and he wore the usual white stocking gaiter, shoes, and red fez of the Albanians.

After we had gone a mile or more we passed the Russian Skete of the Blessed Virgin. The Sketes of Athos are very numerous, and the history of their foundation is in this manner. A few monks establish themselves in some lonely part of the peninsula and on the property of one or other of the principal monasteries to which they mean to attach themselves. Here they build themselves a house to live in which then becomes known as a retreat. By-and-bye they are joined by other monks, and the number of houses, which are often merely rough hovels, increases. Then a small chapel or church is built by the united efforts of the community, and the retreat is dignified with the title of a Skete, or place where asceticism is practised. The monks of the Sketes lead much harder lives than those of the monasteries. They support themselves principally by knitting, making clothes, copying missals, and wood carving; but this last art is not now what it once was, and the Skete of St. Anne, which has been famous for

its wood-carvers for many centuries, no longer turns out crosses of cypress wood and box equal to those beautiful fourteenth and fifteenth century works of art which are to be found in some of our collections in England.

Before we reached the summit of the ridge or backbone of the peninsula, we passed through a large wood composed entirely of sweet chesnut trees. By the side of the path ran a brook of clearest water, and now and then we crossed an open space where the turf was covered with violets and anemones. The smooth branches of the trees shone like burnished silver, and the dead leaves were crushed with a crisp sound as we travelled along. The bells on the necks of our mules echoed and re-echoed through the wood, seeming alone to break the silence, and large green lizards darted out, to gleam for an instant like the flash of an emerald, and then as suddenly to disappear in the shadow of some glistening stone. There was everything to make Nature look her best, flowers and trees, grassy slopes and rushing water, together with a bright sky and a clear air; one thing alone was wanting—the voices of birds, and where there should have been this music there was silence. There were gorgeous butterflies, but no birds, and we saw very few during the whole of our travels in this marvellously beautiful country.

When we were in the middle of the wood we passed a solitary figure: a monk who stood with his back to us as if he wished to shun our gaze; his hands were clasped in front of him, his eyes were fixed on the ground, and now and then a shiver ran through his

frame as if he were suffering intense cold. The little Albanian leading my mule looked up at me and touched his forehead. I understood, the monk was mad, and as I turned to look again at the gaunt figure in the wood, I could hardly repress a shiver too, for the intense loneliness of this poor wretched hermit seemed to stand out in curious contrast to the brightness and joyousness of Nature in the season of hope.*

We had now reached an altitude of nearly 4,000 feet, and on coming out of the wood a view lay before us of wondrous beauty. On our right was the great marble peak; but between us and it were a series of wooded hills covered with trees of all kinds: oak, ash, beech, chesnut, plane, ilex, poplar, olive, and cypress, together with an undergrowth of mimosa, cistus, arbutus, and laburnum. The land sloped in sharp declivities towards the sea; and in the distance were the islands of Thasos, Samothrace, Lemnos, and Imbros. Fifteen hundred feet below us was the village of Caryes, nestling among its nut trees, and close to it the monastery of Cutlumus; while along the coast, which was about two miles distant, Hilarion pointed out to us the houses of Pantocratoros, Stavronigeta, Iveron, Philotheus, and Caracalla.

There is a wonderful difference between the two sides

* At one time Mount Athos was the place where refractory and demented prelates were sent to be taken care of; but I was unable to discover that this was the case now. One is driven rather to the conclusion, on meeting an individual of this kind, that the life of a hermit sometimes terminates in idiocy: no man can war against nature with impunity.



THE HOLY MOUNTAIN.



of the peninsula; the western coast is wild, rocky, and, in many places, almost soil-less; but the eastern is extensively cultivated, and where the woods end the ground is given up either to vineyards or to wheat.

We rested on the ridge for an hour or two before descending to Caryes, and employed the time sketching the great peak which Dinocrates wished to carve into a gigantic statue of Alexander, and which local superstition assigns as the exceeding high mountain from whence Our Lord was shown all the kingdoms of the world. On the summit of the mountain there is a little village where the festival of the Transfiguration is celebrated annually; but owing to the depth of the snow it is unapproachable during the greater part of the year.

The descent down to Caryes was by no means easy, and in some places was so steep that it was almost impossible to remain in the saddle. We were surrounded by a forest containing many fine trees; but when we reached the village the country was covered with snow.

The village, or "the Hazels," consists of a cluster of small houses intersected by winding paths, which in some places so narrow that the horses are obliged to pass each other, and the houses are covered with suspending awnings across the street. Unlike any other village there are no women here, the place being inhabited only by monks and Russians. It

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The path down to Caryes was by no means easy riding, and in some places was so steep that it was almost impossible to remain in the saddle. We were surrounded at first by woods containing many fine trees; but when we approached the village the country was covered with hazels.

The village of Caryes, or "the Hazels," consists of a curious jumble of low houses intersected by winding alleys. These alleys are in some places so narrow that it is difficult for two mules to pass each other, and owing to the practice of suspending awnings across them, there is often little head-room. Unlike any other village or town in the world there are no women here, for Caryes, like the rest of Athos, is inhabited only by men and boys—Greeks, Bulgarians, and Russians. It

seemed to be a busy place, and in the houses, few of which rose to the dignity of a first story, men were at work at their trades, such as shoe-making, weaving, tailoring, knife-grinding, and so forth. Several of the shops were kept by monks, and in these, beads, crosses made of horn, wood, or mother-of-pearl, incense, and coloured prints and icons were for sale. The best houses in the village are the town houses owned by some of the monasteries, the residence of the Turkish caimacan, and the house of the Holy Synod of Monte Santo, and there is also an interesting church containing some frescoes of the eleventh century painted, the monks told us, by Panselinos. A curious legend concerning this artist shall be related presently, but before going farther it is right that a few words should be said about the quality of those who form the bulk of the population of Athos, as well as concerning the means by which order is maintained, and the internal affairs of this strange country are regulated.

Among the monks of Athos men of all kinds may be found. There are those who have served in the Greek and Russian armies as officers and privates, and there are others who have sailed to all parts of the globe; there are those who have failed in trade, and seen much of the ups and downs of life, and there are others who have been brought up in the monasteries from boyhood. In such a mixed assemblage as this there are, of course, characters of every variety, and inside and outside the monasteries men are to be met with who lead hard lives and practise the severest asceticism, as well as those

who are fat and well liking and who appear to do much as they please.

The monks are divided into two classes, probationers and caloyers. A man who desires to become a monk is accepted as a probationer for three years, after which he takes the vows of the monastery promising to obey his superiors, and to conform to the rules of the establishment. If, however, he brings with him into the monastery a sum varying from fifteen to forty pounds, he is excused the term of probation and the menial duties which fall to the lot of that class. From a caloyer, a monk can be promoted to the rank of a Father, when he becomes eligible for the post of head of a department of his monastery, or as a candidate for the Holy Synod.

The degrees of the monastic state are three—the Gown, the Lesser Habit, and the Great Habit. The monks commence with the Gown after their term of probation, and generally reach the Lesser Habit. Very few ever take the Great Habit, it being reserved for those who are about to die, or for men who have determined to cut themselves off altogether from the world, like the solitary priests or hermits of the peninsula. Only a small proportion of the monks become priests, and when the extreme length and frequency of the Church services is taken into consideration this is not to be wondered at. The responsibility and ordering of the services falls solely upon the shoulders of the priests, and they certainly appear to be the hardest-worked class in the monasteries. But I will come to the church services presently.

The monasteries are of two kinds, cœnobite and idiorrhythmic. In the cœnobite monasteries the monks have everything in common, the government being in the hands of an Egoumenos, or abbot, who is elected for life by the monks, and whose appointment has to be confirmed by the Holy Synod as well as by the Patriarch of Constantinople. In the idiorrhythmic monasteries the monks live much as they like, and there is no community of goods; the government is in the hands of two wardens and a controller, who are elected by the Elders of the monastery annually. In neither class of monastery are any absolute rules laid down for the guidance of the monks, and order appears to be maintained more by custom and popular opinion than by the canons and fundamental laws.

And now as regards the form of Government in Athos. Each monastery is a separate organization in itself, but the general conduct of the affairs of the country is entrusted to an assembly termed the Holy Synod of Monte Santo. Each of the twenty great monasteries is represented in the Synod by one member elected annually, and maintained at Caryes for his year of office at his monastery's expense. The representative from Lavra is the President, and besides the twenty members there is a committee of four also elected annually by the monasteries in rotation. The Holy Synod, which thus numbers in all twenty-five members, is responsible for the efficiency of the guard of twenty soldiers employed in keeping women and strangers out of the country, and in the duties of a kind of police; it also assesses the

amount each monastery has to contribute towards the sum paid annually to the Porte; it deals with defaulters and criminals; maintains the bridges and tracks (for they cannot be called roads); arbitrates in any disputes which may arise between the monasteries; and administers the fund for general expenses to which all the monasteries subscribe.

The carrying out of sentences passed by the Synod, like the actual collection of the taxes, is in the hands of the caimacan and a staff of about twenty Turkish officials. But though, in a measure, the caimacan is thus subordinate to the Synod, he, as representative of the Porte, is responsible to his Government for the security of the country. In this way each monk has to provide himself, at the cost of a franc, with a certificate of identity signed by the caimacan, and more than once we were struck by the absolute terror in which the monks held the Turkish officials. Mixing a good deal with the monks as we did, we of course heard many complaints of the Turkish rule, and we were assured that during the period in which there seemed a likelihood of war between Greece and Turkey no newspapers were allowed to enter Athos, and all letters were first opened by the Turkish officials at Cayres before being sent on to the monasteries.

In one monastery where we stayed for a time, a monk was very desirous of procuring an English watch, and took us into his confidence on the subject. We, of course, volunteered to do what we could to further his wishes, and suggested our sending the watch by post to

Caryes. "Oh, no!" he replied, with a wink, "that would never do; if the watch once got there I should never see it." However universal this dread of the Turks may be, it is impossible not to feel that the Porte is perfectly right in taking precautions; experience has proved that anything in the nature of political intrigue is singularly attractive to the monks, and perhaps the recollections of sixty years ago have not altogether died out.



CHAPTER X.

MOUNT ATHOS.—VATOPEDI.

THE conditions of life in the various monasteries of the Holy Mountain appear to an outsider to be very much of a pattern: there is the same poor fare, the same interminable services, the same uniform crowd of black-cloaked monks in the largest as in the smallest, and the daily and nightly routine seems to be ordered by the same rules in whichever house one may be staying.

But the monasteries are very dissimilar in other respects: one has all the advantages of picturesque old buildings situated upon a perfect site; another possesses a library replete with illuminated manuscripts; while a third prides itself upon its works of art or the ancient frescoes adorning the walls of its church. There is enough in each and all the monasteries to interest one for many days; and there is a strange fascination about the Holy Mountain which makes one ever content to put up with discomfort and bad food for the sake of living for a day or two in the fifteenth century.

I do not propose to follow out the course of our travels in detail, or to describe the monasteries in turn. If, perhaps, the Lavra is excepted, there is no monastery in Athos more interesting or more wealthy than Vatopedi, and as in the previous chapter I attempted to give the reader an idea of the modern aspect of one of the great houses, I will now refer to that which claims to be the oldest of all.

Vatopedi, the monks will tell you, was founded by Constantine the Great, in token of his becoming a Christian, and thereby being healed of an attack of leprosy. The monastery, thus founded, is said to have been destroyed by Julian the Apostate, and to have been rebuilt in the fourth century by Theodosius the Great in memory of his son Arcadius. The boy Arcadius, it appears, was shipwrecked off the coast of Athos, but saved by the Blessed Virgin, and placed for safety under a bush where the monastery now stands. Hence one of the principal churches in the monastery was dedicated to the Virgin, and the monastery itself received the name of Vatopedi, or "the bush of the child."

In 862 Vatopedi was attacked by the Saracens and the monks put to the sword, part of the buildings being at the same time destroyed; but in 1300 it was perfectly restored by some rich men of Adrianople, named Nicolaus and Antonius, who afterwards became monks of the monastery, and lie buried in front of the church door.

If Vatopedi cannot properly lay claim to being the oldest monastery, it would certainly appear to be the

most wealthy. Besides a very considerable amount of land in the peninsula, it owns properties in Macedonia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, and among its former benefactors it reckons five crowned heads, one at least of whom ended his days within its walls.

The march from Caryes to Vatopedi is a long one. The road, like the other roads in Athos, is merely a sandy track, suitable for a land where there is no wheel traffic, and very little traffic at all. In going from one place to another you are constantly struck by the quietness of the country, for you rarely meet anyone, and sometimes you pass the whole day without seeing a soul.

It was a hot morning on which we left Caryes, such a morning as you get sometimes in England in July, but the sun's rays were tempered by a sea breeze, and the dense foliage of the ilex and arbutus trees often cast their shade upon the road. At mid-day we halted for an hour beside a mountain stream, where it was crossed by an old wooden bridge. The water dashed and leaped down the mountain between high banks overgrown with moss and ferns and flowers, and on either side great huge trees leaned across the stream till their tops met overhead. Beneath us were woods and corn fields, and the country reminded us of Devon—of the stream at Ivybridge, and of the Dart above Dartington—only it was Devon on a larger scale. Many of the ilex trees were more than a hundred feet high, and the stems of some measured four feet in diameter.

The road was not as quiet as usual on this occasion, and as we sat and rested on the bridge and drank a jug of excellent wine from a skete close by, we were passed by men of various descriptions, who, like ourselves, were on their way to Vatopedi, to attend the great annual festival of the monastery.

Two of these travellers marched some way with us. Both were monks, and both were fine, strapping looking fellows, over six feet high. One of them told us his history. He had once been well off, but had lost all his money, and turned monk because of his misfortunes. His one passion was soldiering, and he said he had fought in many border skirmishes between Greeks and Turks. "You won't find me a monk much longer," he said, "if there is going to be war"; and as he spoke his voice grew louder and his step quicker, so that Hilarion drew on one side and crossed himself as if afraid of these great tall monks of Iveron.

Near a spring where we stopped in the afternoon to water our mules stood the largest tree we saw at all. It was a plane, measuring nearly twenty-eight feet round. Not far from it were many oaks, with a circumference of fifteen or sixteen feet, but the chestnut trees, which were quite as large, had all been cut down. Some of them lay on the ground, and they had evidently been felled many years, for their bark had fallen off, and their stems were bleached by exposure to the weather.

After another mile we left the woods behind us, and entered a country overgrown largely with *laurustinus*

and other evergreens, and here we got our first view of Vatopedi. The monastery stands close to the sea at the head of a small bay, but before reaching it we had to make a considerable detour, and on the way passed some interesting old ruins.

About two centuries ago Eugenius Bulgaris, of Corfu, attempted to benefit the monks by establishing a school in their country, hoping at the same time that Athos might become the centre of learning in the East. A site was chosen near Vatopedi, and buildings were erected. For a time the school flourished, and did an immense amount of good; a large proportion of the monks then, as now, were wholly illiterate, and there was, therefore, ample material to work upon. But this state of affairs did not last; many of the monks set their faces against the school and violently opposed its continuance, and eventually, in 1755, it ceased any longer to be attended. The buildings must have been of a costly nature, for they are of large size, and a double-arched aqueduct, which still remains, connects them with a spring of fresh water on a neighbouring hill.

Efforts are being made in the present day to carry out a regular system of education, and Hilarion told us that many of the monasteries now send one or two of their younger brethren to a school at Caryes.

Numbers of bells were ringing in the towers of Vatopedi as we walked up to the entrance to the monastery. The porch in front of the portal, which was approached by a large, circular, paved incline, consisted

of a tiled dome supported by six stone columns. On either side rose a series of buildings, towers, and domes, the walls of many of which were ornamented with patterns in red, blue, and yellow, while the roofs were brilliant with lichens and mosses. Around the entrance, or lying down in groups in front of the monastery, were numbers of work-people, rough, brigand-looking fellows, from the neighbouring farms and from the monastic lands in Macedonia ; and among them were interspersed a goodly number of monks from the different monasteries who had come to take part in the festival the next day.

In spite of the extensive buildings of Vatopedi, which are said to cover four acres of ground, we began to fear that there was little chance of our having a roof over our heads that night, but accompanied by Hilarion and Julio we entered the portal and asked for a night's lodging. It is part of the religion of the monks to shelter the way-farer, and the monk we addressed went off to fetch a superior. While waiting for him to return, we were overjoyed to see, standing upon a shelf in the porch, two tins labelled "Batty's Preserved Lobster," and at once jumped to the conclusion that we should not have to starve that night. Presently the monk came back, and after conducting us along a covered way, resembling the entrance to a fortress, ushered us at last into a large hall filled with a crowd of men of all sorts and conditions. The monastery of Vatopedi, like the majority in Athos, is of the idiorhythmic order, so there was no Egoumenos to be introduced to. After waiting in the hall for a while, we were shown into a good room,

with many apologies for there being no beds in it. This detail was, however, of little consequence, as on three sides there were broad divans covered with red drugget. Coffee and liqueur were shortly brought to us, and for the first hour after our arrival we held a perfect *levée* of monks who asked us all kinds of questions. The appearance of most of these holy brethren certainly belied the severe asceticism they professed. Several of them were great big fat fellows with cheery faces and a laugh which shook them, and they quite came up to our ideas of what some of the monks must have been in England three hundred years ago. Their familiarity with the topics of the day was remarkable; they knew about our operations in Egypt, and expressed surprise at the way our soldiers had stood the climate, while they were particularly anxious to learn why we ever went to that country. They also made inquiries about our knowledge of Greek history, and our pronunciation of a few lines of Homer provoked some merriment.

We were left to ourselves at 6 o'clock, as all the monks went off to church for the longest service in the whole year—that celebrated in honour of the patron Saint of the monastery. The service on this occasion began at 6 P.M. and lasted throughout the night, and without intermission till 8 o'clock the following morning. It is only right, however, to add that an ordeal of this sort is exceptional. On ordinary days the services take between seven and eight hours; on Sundays about ten hours; and on certain festivals and during Lent, from eleven to twelve hours. The monks, however, never

enjoy more than three hours and a half of uninterrupted rest, for the bell, or sounding-board, for private devotion before the nocturn, rings at 1.15 A.M., and during the twenty-four hours following there are services varying from one to two hours in length, till they finish late at night with the Compline and the Canon to the Virgin. Every monk is bound to communicate four times in the year, but he never, or very rarely does so twice within a space of fifteen days.

An array of services such as this throws a heavy task upon the priesthood, and the reason why taking Holy Orders is unpopular is not far to seek.* The services in the Eastern Church, we must remember, are conducted throughout standing, and, if we except the monotonous droning, without music. This adds not a little to the strain falling on the shoulders of the priests, but still, in spite of the extreme length of the services and the constant repetition, they certainly conduct their duties with reverence, and there is no sign of the severe daily routine begetting indifference.

Next to the services, the most striking point in the daily discipline of the monks is the number of fasts they are called upon to observe. Meat is at all times forbidden, but on festivals and ordinary days, fish, meal, oil, bread, and vegetables, are allowed. On fast days, which number no less than one hundred and sixty-one in the course of the year, bread and wine only are partaken of, though some of the monks on these days eat nothing at all. Still, hard as this life appears, it

* Out of the 220 monks in Vatopedi, less than twenty are priests.

certainly does not interfere with the health of the monks; on the contrary, they are known for their longevity, and there is little sickness among them.

It may be that the poorness of the diet renders them unfit for hard work; and this may account for monks from the monasteries being rarely found working in the fields. They employ hundreds of labourers on their lands, as well as numbers of servants in their monasteries; but beyond a little vine-pruning, and superintending the in-gathering of harvest, we were unable to discover, though we pressed the question many times, that they ever did any manual labour themselves. Their days, as I have said, are largely taken up in attending church; no time being even set apart for meditation or study; and thus one is forced to the conclusion that the monks of Athos, in a large degree, are drones not workers. But a traveller's information on such points, however earnest he may be to arrive at the truth, must often be more or less of a superficial character, and it is best to refrain from driving others to hasty conclusions.

Soon after the monks left us, Julio came in with the two caloyers who had been told off to look after us. One of these put an oil lamp on the table while the other busied himself lighting a fire in a big stove in the corner of the room, and Julio told us he had been directed to inquire what we should like for dinner. In reply, we asked what there was, and after a long consultation were informed that we could have soup and fish. Here the bill of fare stopped short, and our hints about there

being a cock, or perchance some eggs, fell flat. Suddenly, however, we recollected the lobster. The monks smiled—we should have lobster, and with this they left the room.

In due course they returned and set themselves to work to prepare the table. Bread and wine were brought in together with two mysterious-looking dishes. Soup presently followed, and we therefore presumed that the two dishes must of necessity be the fish.

The monks now intimated that everything was ready, and withdrew to the divans. By the dim light of the oil lamp we approached the table and removed the cover from the soup. The room was immediately filled with an aroma of hot, boiled garlic. What was to be done; the monks were watching us from the corner of the room. A glass of wine was poured out and a piece of bread put ready. Then the soup was swallowed, but our appetites were gone.

Now for the contents of the dishes. One of them was purple, the other of a pale blue tinge. The eyes of the monks were still upon us. "Julio," we ask, "which is the lobster?" "That one, Sir," answers Julio, after inquiring from the monks; "the blue one." Alas! it was not the tinned Batty's, but lobster caught on the coast and dried in the sun, moreover it was unrecognisable as lobster and the taste was absolutely astonishing. We felt we could not eat that, so we turned to the purple compound. This appeared to be some glutinous substance mixed with highly-flavoured oil and herbs. We tasted it, and then we laid our forks down; our dinner was at an end—the purple dish was octopus.

Our monks were evidently disappointed, and inquired of Julio why we ate so little. How he explained it I cannot say ; but we gave them some cigarettes to propitiate them, and this soon put matters right.

We had promised some of the monks who had entertained us on our arrival that we would come to the church during the evening, and soon after 9 o'clock we started, in company with two guides.

Our way led through numerous dimly-lighted passages and up and down sundry flights of stairs, till at length we reached an open arcade looking out upon the great court-yard of the monastery. We had not before realised the extent of Vatopedi, but now the vast size of the place burst upon us.

The night was still and the moon was just rising over the hills, and as we paused and looked out through one of the arches the buildings around us stood up against the sky in dark masses of shadow. The effect was that of some masterly piece of scene-painting where the artist had allowed his imagination to run riot in depicting a most strange town. Towers and turrets and domes mixed themselves up with houses rising one above the other, tier upon tier. Beneath were colonnades and cloisters, and above lights came and went in windows placed in quaint gables or beneath broad overhanging eaves. Great trees stood here and there in the court-yard, throwing faint shadows upon the pavement, and now and then black-cloaked figures passed and re-passed in the pale light. The night was still ; but ever and anon through the chill air came the sound of chanting

afar off, and the voices of those whose lives are spent within the ancient walls.

When we reached the church, we found the porch, or pronaos, filled with a great crowd of monks. These, however, kindly made way for us, and we soon passed through the esonarthex and found ourselves in the nave.

The church is not by any means a large building, and its measurements are probably not more than 90 feet in length by 50 in breadth. In architectural beauty it is deficient, but in age, in interest, and in the richness of its internal decoration, it excels all other churches in the country. It is frescoed throughout, and some of these paintings are many hundred years old. From the central dome hangs an enormous corona of silver and silver gilt, and the numerous candlesticks and candelabra are also of silver. The iconostasis is richly carved, and many of the pictures and icons are overlaid in part with plaques of silver and gold. The floor is paved with coloured marbles, and the usual stalls or standing places are ranged round the walls.

There can be no doubt that night is the time to see one of these churches to advantage. The catholicon of Vatopedi was brilliantly lighted with candles and numbers of small oil lamps, and the colour and glitter of the building contrasted curiously with the sombre crowd of monks in their tall black caps. The scene was indeed a strange one. The congregation was motionless and apparently attentive; but some had already sunk down on the floor and fallen asleep. The priests were taking the chanting in turn, and when a

fresh one began he started on a high note and wended his way down the scale in an inconceivable variety of turns, till he arrived at the depth of a deep diapason little better than a growl. His voice spent, another took up the song, and so it went on hour after hour, the congregation standing round, but following the prayers in no book.

We did not get much sleep that night; the droning of the priests was in our ears, and the great hall into which our room opened was filled with a crowd of Greeks, Albanians, and Bulgarians, who kept talking and laughing till the small hours. Then came a short interval of quiet, when vigorous snoring took the place of the talking. Two of the hall company had acquired a wooden form which they considered fulfilled the conditions of a bed better than the stone floor, and this they propped against the wall near our door. Early in the morning the form gave way with a crash, which so effectually aroused everyone that no further idea of sleep could be entertained. At dawn all the bells in the monastery were rung lustily; and at 8 o'clock, when the service came to an end and the church doors were locked, various small pieces of ordnance, together with every gun and pistol in the place, were let off several times.

After a meagre breakfast upon our last tin of sardines, we went out into the great court-yard and found some hundreds of labourers being regaled with fish, bread, and wine, and the monastery was evidently keeping open house. Outside the walls a fair was being held, while

anchored in the bay were six or seven small sailing vessels dressed out with bunting.

We paid another visit to the church during the day in order to see the frescoes. Those in the pronaos, which resembles a cloister more than a porch, have been restored and spoilt. There is no attempt at pictorial effect here, and the paintings consist of rows of figures ranged one above the other. The doors into the exonarthex are of wood inlaid with tortoise-shell and mother-of-pearl, and are quite works of art in themselves. Over them, as well as on either side, are some fine mosaics, a style of decoration rarely found now in the peninsula, but which was, no doubt, at one time common in most of the churches of Athos. The frescoes in the interior of the church represent scenes from the life of Christ, while those in the exonarthex have reference to the Apocalypse. These last are among the oldest, and in character are quite as early as the twelfth century. In many places restoration has been their ruin; but those that remain are worth coming a long way to see.

In the previous chapter mention was made of a monk, by name Panselinos, the decorator of the church at Caryes, and there is reason to believe that some of the frescoes at Vatopedi are also by him.

Panselinos is supposed by some to have been the father of ecclesiastical decoration. A treatise on the art, attributed to him, is still treasured in the peninsula, and the monks attribute these writings to divine inspiration. The laws laid down in the manuscript, which has been translated into French by M. Didron,

certainly seem, in a measure, to have governed Christian Iconography in the East, and thus we often find, in Athos especially, the same places devoted to the same subjects—the interior of the church to the life of Christ, the Annunciation over the entrance door, the Day of Judgment and the Last Supper at the eastern and western end of the refectory, and so on.

But the frescoes by Panselinos are looked upon as inspired work no less than his writings, and the following legend is told of what befel him when he first took to church decoration.

Struck with the idea that the work of Christ might be furthered by the representation of scenes from His life, he entered the church at Caryes to commence his first frescoes. He had just begun to paint when the thought crossed his mind that he, a sinner, was committing sacrilege by attempting to represent the Redeemer. His brush fell from his hand with horror, and he bowed himself down upon the ground. All that day and all that night he remained in prayer asking for forgiveness, and, at the same time, that if it were right power might be given him to execute the work he had at heart. His prayer was answered, he returned to his work, and from that time his life was devoted to the churches and chapels of Athos. One day, however, he was missed. Search was made for the artist whose life of devotion had secured the affection of his fellow monks, and at last he was found lying cold and stiff in a solitary cell on the Holy Mountain.

It would be out of place here to refer at any length to

the influence art has had on the spread of religion. The treatment of sacred subjects in paintings has been a great power in the Eastern no less than in the Western church, and it is well to remember when we enter, as in Athos, the doors of sacred buildings and look round at the curious old frescoes on the walls, that when Byzantium was the great centre of Christianity, art was considered as a gift from God, and it was thus employed very largely towards the furtherance of religion. Among an illiterate people the influence of art was found to equal that of the most earnest preacher, and by means of paintings, far more than by books, the life of Christ, the history of the Church, and the lives of the saints and martyrs who died for that Church, were brought home to the minds of the Eastern Christians.

Within the walls of Vatopedi there are no less than sixteen churches and chapels besides the one above referred to; but the monks have devoted all their energies to making their catholicon the richest and most perfect of all, and everything within it is of the most costly description. The relics are numerous, and include a piece of the Cross, the girdle of the Virgin, which is supposed to possess the power of curing diseases, and the skull of St. Gregory.

The libraries in Athos are no longer neglected. That at Vatopedi is particularly well arranged, and we spent some time in it with the librarian, an old monk in large gold spectacles. He was most enthusiastic about his books, and among those he showed us were the works of St. Chrysostom, beautifully illuminated; a manuscript

in which the lettering was in gold on white vellum, and a curious old geography which we were assured was by Strabo. There was a good catalogue of the books, and the manuscript portion of the library alone consisted of nearly seven hundred volumes.

There is one subject in connection with the monasteries which has not so far been mentioned. In travelling about the country one is perpetually passing rude crosses of wood, sometimes standing on the roadside, and sometimes nailed to the trees. These do not, however, mark the resting-places of monks, but merely answer the purposes of wayside shrines, and a burial-ground is a thing very rarely met with. The cemeteries of the monasteries are always small enclosures. When a monk becomes ill he relies on the will of God for his recovery,—though at Vatopedi, it should be mentioned, we were shown a hospital,—and when he dies his body is buried for three years, and then exhumed, the bones being usually thrown on to a common heap in a crypt. Some of the monasteries retain the skulls of their brethren, and now and then you are shown many hundreds of these emblems of mortality arranged neatly upon shelves.

It was a lovely morning when, after making presents to those who had been so kind to us at Vatopedi, we set out to rejoin the yacht. The distance we had to travel was little short of thirty miles, for the country is hilly and the roads do not run straight. As usual we were provided with mules, and while I was busy trying to make a saddle out of some rugs, Julio came up with one

of the finest men I have ever seen. The manager of the lands of the monastery stood fully six feet and a half, and looked as strong as a Hercules. His dress suited him : long boots and spurs, loose blue knickerbockers, secured round the waist by a scarlet *faha*, a white shirt open at the throat, and disclosing much of a brawny chest, and a short blue jacket richly embroidered with black braid. He wore the usual red fez cap, and his hair was black, short, and curly. In age he might have been fifty, but he was as active as a boy of sixteen, and the expression in his sun-burnt face betokened a man of the best of humours.

Hilarion knew little or nothing of the northern part of the country, and we were glad to hear, therefore, that the manager was going to Erisso, and wished to accompany us on our journey. He was riding a particularly nice-looking Arab, and while wondering how we should be able to keep pace with him, Julio told us that he desired I would ride his horse. The politeness of the Greeks is well nigh proverbial, but I was certainly not prepared for this self-denial on the part of the manager. However, he would not hear of my riding a mule ; he was much stronger than I was, he said, and the journey was a long one, so the Arab became mine for the day.

I will not attempt to describe in detail the beauties of the country through which we travelled. Sometimes it was like Scotland, and the ground was bare of trees and covered with heather ; at others it was like the woods and forests in Surrey, and then again it reminded us of Devon. The road, nearly the whole way, was a mere

track ; now and then it ran along a ledge of rock on the hill-side, where a single false step would have meant a fall of some hundred feet into the scrub below ; sometimes it took us through great woods, and at others across fields of corn. The views were always changing, and there was always something fresh to look at, some passing effect of sunlight playing upon the landscape, or the sea, or the distant shores of Macedonia.

Tired of talking, the manager would occasionally beguile the time, droning out the refrain of the priests' song the night before, and as his voice grew louder, Hilarion joined in a feeble key, and so they would go on singing together for half an hour or more.

About midday we passed Constamonitou, a small monastery standing in a wooded glen on the western coast, and in the afternoon we crossed the lands of Zographu. This monastery occupies a splendid site on the summit of a hill surrounded by innumerable cypresses, and like Chiliandari, a few miles farther on, is largely tenanted by Servian and Bulgarian monks.

Just before sundown the manager led us to the new monastery of Cormitzena, the branch house Russico has established at the northern extremity of Athos. The country all round the buildings had been cleared of trees, and there were many hundreds of acres under vines. The head man of the monastery gave us some excellent wine and water, and told us he had once been in London, and still had friends there. After a short rest we started again, and as darkness was closing in, reached three small houses on the sea-shore known by

the name of Frankokastro. Here we had expected to get a boat to take us off to the yacht, a distance of about five miles, but not all the authority and commanding presence of the manager would induce the monks to assist us. The head of this detachment of monks was a priest, and he and some five or six brethren entered into an animated conversation with the manager and Julio. Words grew louder, and as it was now quite dark, and we were anxious that something should be arranged, we asked Julio what the quarrelling was all about. It was the old story; the monks were afraid that if they put a boat off, the Turkish soldiers would see them and they would get into trouble. The manager annoyed at this, called the monks "stupid old cows," which appeared to be a most finished piece of invective. "The manager," said Julio, "cross himself every time he say that, Sir"; and certainly judging by the amount of crossing that went on, bad language must have been tolerably plentiful on both sides.

The end of it was we had to continue our journey another mile along the sea-shore, and in the darkness we got separated. The shingle on the beach was composed of stones as large and round as Dutch cheeses, and as I stumbled along in the darkness I was suddenly addressed by a woman, and realised at once that I had passed beyond the boundary which separates the inhabitants of Athos from the rest of the world. We all met again at some fishermen's huts on the shore, and just as we were putting off in a boat were hailed by the captain in the launch.



CHAPTER XI.

GALLIPOLI.—SCUTARI.—SEVASTOPOL.

FROM calms to storms and storms to calms with a spell of fair winds between: such is the weather meted out in the Levant and in all other seas, and such the constant change which adds one more to the many attractions of yachting and relieves life at sea of its dullness. If the sea always ran high and gales swept for ever over its surface, those only would go afloat who were compelled; but if the ocean was always as smooth and unruffled as a pond, its very monotony would keep many of us ashore. We may cry for peace in fighting a gale which seems to have no ending, but anyone who has indulged in yachting to any extent will tell us that perpetual calms go very near boredom. Perhaps then it is better as it is. Rough times may come and we may get sorely knocked about; but one day black clouds will be driven away and the sea no longer be lashed into madness by the wind; then the sun will shine in a blue sky and there will be time to rest and to refit. Change is always good and profitable; sameness is dullness.

After a day spent in motionless water beneath the shadow of Mount Athos, we drifted during the night as far as the island of Lemnos, and when morning dawned, we found ourselves in a gale of wind, and *Ptarmigan* taking a bath in a heavy sea. To beat up against the current running out of the Dardanelles in such weather was hopeless, so we went about and got under the lee of Lemnos, where we lowered a boat, and amused ourselves shooting pigeons as they flew in and out of the honey-combed rocks.

According to the legend, Lemnos, in the matter of inhabitants, appears to have been the opposite of Athos, for when the Argonauts landed here they found the place inhabited by women who had murdered every male on the island. We spent the whole day sailing along the south coast, and a more unattractive country I have never seen ; there is not a hill of any importance, and scarcely a tree, or even a bush, was visible.

At five o'clock the next morning we entered the Dardanelles, and after beating against adverse winds and currents for three hours, anchored, at length, about a mile below Chanak.

Our cruise was now drawing rapidly to a close, and only a fortnight remained before we should be turning our faces homewards overland. There was something ignominious about being towed ; but time was of moment, so we put our pride in our pockets and engaged a tug to take us as far as Gallipoli the next day.

That night the yacht became an object of suspicion to the Turkish authorities of Chanak, and just as we were

turning in, a boat came alongside containing twenty men armed with rifles. We explained that we were English, and had obtained pratique, and they thereupon left us. But in a few moments the boat returned; and three men, wearing the Turkish uniform, came on board and requested to be shown below. No sooner had they arrived in the saloon than they commenced rolling their cigarettes, and it was only by an admixture of firmness and extreme politeness that we were eventually able to get rid of them. The reason of their visit we never discovered as conversation was impossible, but it struck us as a curious example of Turkish officiousness and bad manners.

Four hours towing on the morning of April 11th brought us to Gallipoli soon after breakfast, and we thus got through the Dardanelles with little trouble.

Gallipoli to-day is the Gallipoli of '54, and the place has not changed in any material particular since our first detachments, and those of the French, landed here in the month of April, thirty-four years ago. The town has the same dilapidated appearance now that it had then, and consists of the same ugly jumble of rickety structures, roofed with heavy earthen tiles, and built half of planks and half of mud and stones. The best houses seemed to afford but poor shelter against the bitter east winds which course over the land at this season of the year, and, save for the crops, the country round looked cheerless and inhospitable.

A rickety old wooden pier and landing stage, twisted and contorted by time and weather and long since fallen

into disuse, was the only relic of the old days we were able to discover. It was pointed out to us by an aged inhabitant of the place who had worked with the Transport corps, and who shook his head gravely when he referred to the difficulty of finding the English soldiers enough to eat. "That was a hard matter indeed," he said; "but we have had another hungry army here since then, and Crimean days seem a long while ago."

We found Gallipoli so uninteresting and the east winds for which it is famous so bitterly cold, that we determined to go on to Constantinople without loss of time. It was still blowing fresh when we weighed soon after daylight the next morning, but on entering the Sea of Marmora the wind dropped, and by sunset we had come only twenty miles. Delay of this sort was annoying; and matters had not improved when the next afternoon found us still close to Marmora Island. C—— was not above wishing for the Chanak tug again, and *Ptarmigan* was very nearly finishing her outward voyage at the end of a tow-rope. During the day a large steamer passed us bound for Constantinople, and C—— who was on deck ran up the signal—"Will you tow us?" The steamer pulled up immediately, and answered "Yes"; showing us at the same time that she was the *Torbay* from Brixham. Down came our flags, and up ran the next lot—"How much?" "Twenty pounds," was the answer. "Fifteen," we replied. Then for some minutes there was no response, till at last "No" was run up, and at the same time the *Torbay* went full steam ahead.

But we lost nothing by waiting, for a little later we got the breeze, and under close-reefed main and fore, and reefed staysail, were at anchor at Constantinople in twelve hours.

Every traveller who has had the good fortune to approach Constantinople by sea on a fine sunny morning, has been struck with amazement at the appearance of the place. Those who have never visited it are apt to think of Constantinople as an ordinary large, dirty, Turkish town, abounding in dogs and lazy, indolent, do-nothing Mahomedans—a sink of iniquity sadly in want of cleansing, where the standard of morality is at the lowest possible point, and where wealth and ease may be found cheek by jowl with disease, penury, and death—a place where strange crimes are committed by unknown hands; where there is slavery and unjust oppression, and where the bow-string and the *kurbash* are in the hands of sycophants and favourites; where men's heads are exposed to the gaze of crowds, and where life is held cheap in the race for money and the luxury and indifference which money buys.

And, perhaps, in a way the picture is a true one, but there is another side. Viewed from the sea the appearance of Constantinople is enchanting. We may think of it as an ordinary large Turkish town; but it is something more than this, and the first thing that strikes one on approaching it is its enormous size. For miles it extends along the shores of the Sea of Marmora; for miles again it extends on either side of the Golden Horn to the Sweet Waters of Europe; over undulating hills it

spreads in one vast maze of palaces, mosques, and minarets, houses of wood, marble, and stone, and broad expanses of cypress-grown death-fields. All along the shores of the bay to the entrance to the Bosphorus it stretches, till the town at last breaks into villages surrounded by scenery which is that of a beautiful river. Across the narrows stands the Asiatic suburb, Scutari, and here again the houses spread along the coast in both directions as far as the eye can reach. We may well ask ourselves where does this great group of cities begin and end, for Constantinople appears to be without limits; its port is nigh as crowded as that of the Thames, and the vessels lying there as the pebbles on the sea shore for numbers.

A description of Constantinople, even if it were possible in so narrow a space, does not come within the scope of this chapter, and I must, therefore, refrain from dealing with its many tempting points of interest. We spent more than a week here, riding all over Stamboul, Pera, Tophane, and Galata, and steaming in the launch up the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, and along the shores of the Sea of Marmora. We spent hours haggling in that network of tunnelled bazaars, and like others have done before us, often came away feeling sure that we had had the best of the bargain, for did not those of whom we bought, after plying us with coffee and cigarettes, toss the baubles into our laps, and throw up their hands praying Allah to save them from ruin? We spent hours too in those most delightful of all boats, the caiques of Constantinople. Gondolas are familiar to

many of us, but the gondola with all the skill which turns and twists it in and out of the narrow watery ways of Venice, has not the fascinating motion of the caique. The motion is that of skating over the smooth surface of flawless ice, not that of rowing; the slightest touch of the oar moves the boat, yet there is no jerk; and as you lie at full length on the cushions in the stern, and you skim along the top of the water at incredible speed, you are ready to declare that the caique is the best boat in the world.

So the time slipped by; some of it, perhaps, wasted, but not all. He would be an idle man who, on a visit, wasted his time in the capital of Turkey, for there is much to be seen, and more to be learnt and thought about. The longer you stop at Constantinople the more does the vast extent and wealth of the place seem to grow. You may go from the streets to the byeways and ride for miles in the most unfrequented parts of the four cities; Sta. Sophia, the Sulimanyeh, or any other of the more famous mosques, may engage you for days; your eyes may be dazzled by a mine of precious stones in the Treasury; you may see strange sights and hear strange sounds; but still there is always something fresh and new: you may stand on the famous bridge at the mouth of the Golden Horn, and watch that busy crowd passing and repassing all day long; a mass of shipping lies at your feet, and the air is filled with the noise of the world of commerce; you look up, and to right and left stretches an interminable extent of town; but while you gaze and wonder at the scene, one question will thrust

itself forward in spite of all distractions, and you are for ever asking yourself, are the Turk's days in Europe really numbered, and what nation is it that will eventually be master here?

On our last day at Constantinople we steamed over to Scutari. The barracks, where Florence Nightingale once nursed the sick and wounded from the Crimea, were crammed with troops, and we were not allowed to enter, so we made the best of our way to the English cemetery. Before reaching it we passed the largest Turkish death-field on this side of the water. The cemeteries of Constantinople are one of the distinctive features of the place; they are in reality huge forests of cypress trees covering many square miles of country. The numbers who lie buried in them must be counted by millions, for the Mahomedan never disturbs a grave, and no ground is ever buried over twice. Each grave is marked by a pillar or post of white marble, having, in the case of males, a turban, and in females a palm branch carved upon the stone. The great burial ground at Scutari is in places quite impenetrable; the cypress trees have grown up closely side by side, till they have become matted together, and thus they have lost their beautiful shades of green, and turned black and become hideous. The white marble posts lean at every angle, or lie broken on the ground, and there is a gloom and a stillness about these death-fields which makes them singularly uninviting.

It is curious to pass from a place such as this to an English graveyard. Our cemetery at Scutari stands at

the edge of some high ground immediately above the Sea of Marmora. Here there is stillness, but there is no gloom. Rich grass covers the rows of mounds; the place is bright with flowers; bushes and evergreens are planted among the graves; and the place has the appearance of a garden.

A great obelisk of granite, erected by "Queen Victoria and her people," marks the place where upwards of eight thousand English soldiers and sailors were laid when their fighting days were done; but for the most part the graves are without headstones, and there is no means of knowing who lies beneath.

One side of the enclosure, along the edge of the cliff, seems to have been reserved for officers, and here you may read many a sad story in a few words. One stone is in memory of two brothers who both died of wounds; another is in memory of an officer, whose wife came out to nurse him, but who "survived him only three days"; and so they go on telling their tales of suffering and sorrow.

But there is a bright side to it; we may brush away the tears, for all these gave their lives for their country, and there is no more honourable death than that—no death a man should desire more.

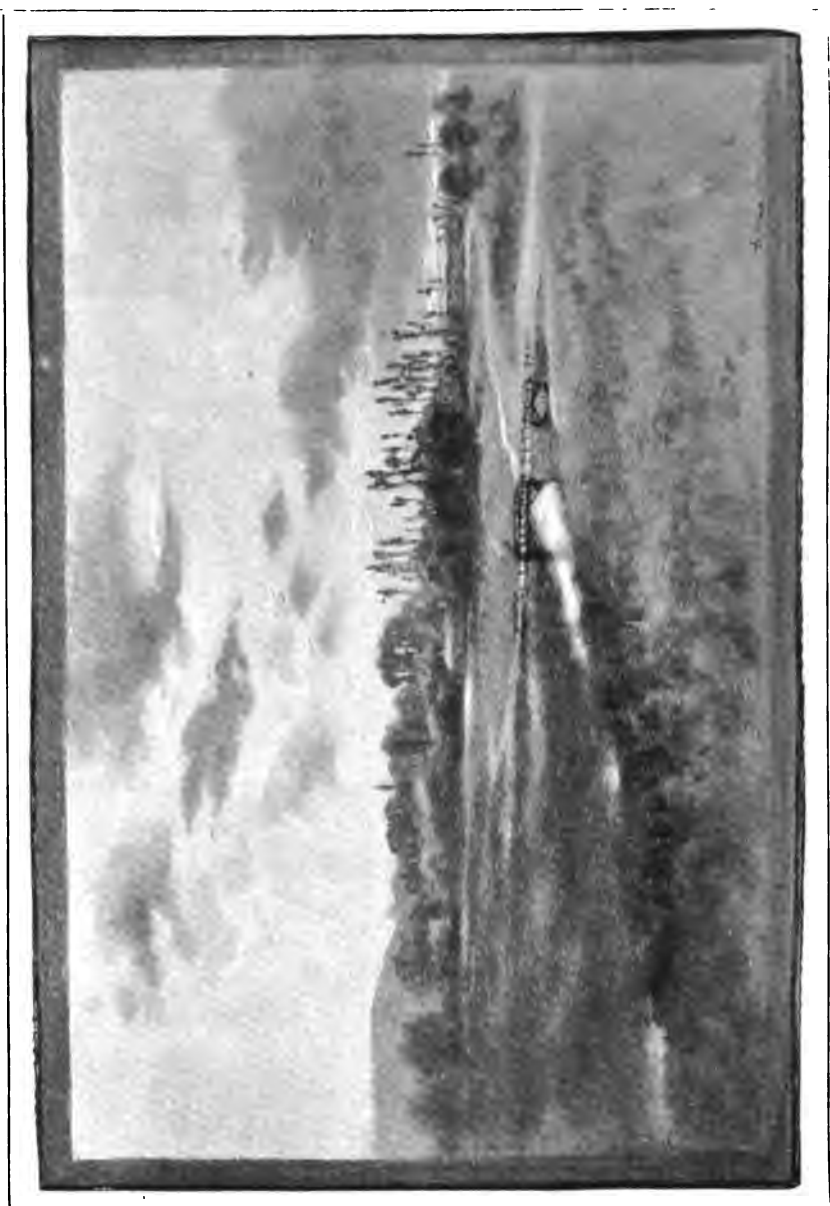
Before saying good-bye to the *Ptarmigan* and starting on our way homewards by the Danube and the Rhine, we had one more place we wished to visit.

A Russian steamer leaves Constantinople for Sevastopol three times a week, and performs the passage of 300 miles in about thirty-four hours; so in order to save

time we determined to proceed by this route, and accordingly booked by the steamship *Vladimir*.

Three-and-thirty years have come and gone since the Allied armies left those dreary heights around Sevastopol, and our ranks now contain few who took part in the campaign. Yet we still treasure up recollections of our one big war since Peninsular days, and we give a place to it which we do not grant to any of the numerous wars we have waged since. At the mention of the Crimea our minds flash back to the glories of the Alma; we seem to hear again the thunder of horses feet over the plain of Balaklava; and we picture to ourselves the drizzling dawn of the 5th November, when the soldier had his battle and emblazoned his country's flag with the name of Inkerman. One by one the events of the long siege crowd up before us, and we see lines of ragged men, grown gaunt and thin, and the small remnant of a great army; brigades reduced in strength to a few hundreds, and regiments mere skeletons; a landscape, snow covered and swept with storms of wind and rain, and disease stalking abroad and carrying off many which shot and shell have spared. Then we picture the end: the air is rent with a heavy fire, and men rush on to the assault, only to be driven back with fearful slaughter. But the tricolor flies at length over the Malakoff; flames rise out of the battered buildings of the town; and Sevastopol is ours at last.

And a visit to Sevastopol now will bring back to the mind the scenes of long ago, as vividly as if they had occurred but yesterday, for the town is little changed, and



THE ALMA.

a large part of it is still in ruins. The country round also bears unmistakeable signs of the war ; but even if the ground was no longer scored with the marks of zig-zags and parallels, the crosses on Cathcart's Hill, and the great monument at the Russian Kladbistché, are sufficient to mark the scenes of former strife.

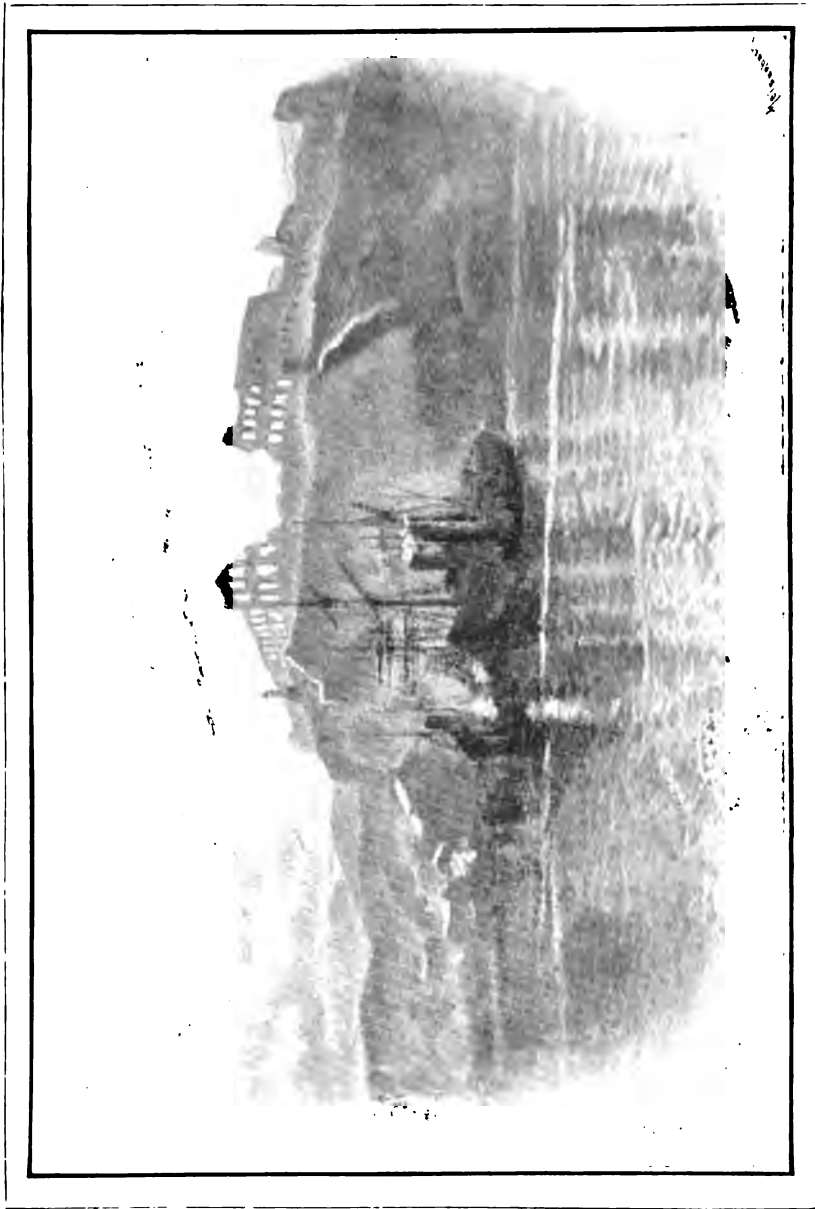
Our voyage from Constantinople was the reverse of pleasant, and no sooner did we emerge from the Bosphorus than we fell in with a whole gale of wind. The *Vladimir* was a very fair sea boat, but owing to the gale being straight in our teeth, we spent an extra day in the inhospitable Euxine. We had on board a number of Tartars as deck passengers, and as sea after sea broke over us and flooded the decks, the misery of these poor wretched people became extreme. All of them appeared to be bad sailors, and in the prostration induced by seasickness, their goods and chattels were washed about the deck, until a good many found their way overboard. However, there is an end one way or the other to every voyage, and after passing the lighthouse on Cape Chersonese, we ran into smooth water. It wanted an hour to midnight, but by the light of a bright moon we were able to make out many points of interest.

As we neared the town of Sevastopol, we were astonished at the extraordinary quiet of the place. In Kamiesch bay, the French base of operations, not a ship or boat was visible. Even Artillery creek was tenanted only by one small brig ; and as we passed between forts Alexander and Constantine, not a sound came to us from the shore. We glided quietly into

Dockyard creek, and the town of Sevastopol gradually opened before us, but no lights were visible, and the masts only of a few vessels rose out of the misty air. Close to us on the left, and high up above the harbour, was the vast block of ruined barracks, with the moon shining through great gaps in the walls, and through long rows of shattered windows ; but though our whistle re-echoed round the harbour, no notice was taken of us, and no boat disturbed the oily surface of the sea.

The next morning we were ashore soon after 6 o'clock, and if, the night before, the appearance of the ruined barracks had surprised us, the condition of the town excited astonishment. Sevastopol looked as if it had recently undergone a bombardment. Ruin was visible on all sides, and a large part of the town was as it had been left at the close of the war. The clock-tower was cracked from top to bottom, the pillars lying at its feet. Rows of houses were in ruins, making great gaps in the streets ; some were roofless, others had their balconies blown off, their gables shattered, and their windows smashed. The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul was a wreck, and, at first sight, nothing appeared to have been done to wipe out the recollections of the war. The ruined town looked as if it had been ruined within a week, and this effect was further intensified by our meeting a cart-load of fragments of shot and shell being taken away from a block of ruined houses.

We asked how it was the town had never been rebuilt, and received for an answer : " Well, you see, after the war, the Government lost all interest in the place,



THE OLD BARRACKS, SEVASTOPOL.



and the late Tzar never came near us, so we were left to take care of ourselves. The principal proprietors were ruined by the siege, and, as soon as they could, removed to other parts of the country. We had no money, so nothing could be done ; but we are working hard now, and if you come back in ten years time you will find us thriving. The visit of the Tzar at the launching of the *Tchesmé*, has quite made things look up."

A great amount of work is, no doubt, being done, and men are to be seen on all sides clearing away the ruins and collecting the stone for new buildings ; but it will be fully ten years before the town is altogether restored. New docks are being constructed, and one has been already opened. A vast number of hands are employed at the dockyards, where the greatest activity prevails, and where more than one ironclad is in course of building. A new town has sprung up close to the Malakoff, and new barracks have been erected between the Malakoff and the Redan, but all this is on the opposite side of the creek to the old town. A railway-station is now situated at the point where the Woronzoff road runs down to the harbour, and the line tunnels under the Malakoff and winds away up the valley of Inkerman.

By daylight we found that a much larger quantity of shipping was anchored in the harbour than we had supposed, and besides two wooden frigates and several merchant steamers, there were the two circular ironclads, the *Novgorod* and the *Popoff*, and upwards of a dozen torpedo-boats of various sizes.

So in wandering about Sevastopol one sees, on the one side, ruined houses and a town apparently neglected, and, on the other, a busy dockyard and a store of untiring energy. Russia is as strong, if not stronger, than ever she was in the Black Sea. The walls of Sevastopol bear the marks of shot and shell, but the effects of the war have passed away. Treaties have been as good as torn up, and, in looking back, it seems as if England had poured out her blood and treasure to little purpose.

It may be that the activity at Sevastopol points elsewhere, and that future events are casting their shadows. Russia has constantly before her mind one great object, to the ultimate attainment of which her energies are either directly or indirectly devoted. The victory of the Cross over the Crescent, and its re-establishment on the summit of Sta. Sophia, is a prominent article in the creed of every Russian, and the advancement of his country's dominions, the aim alike of the diplomatist and the soldier. Russia's good offices in neighbouring States have for their first object the advancement of Russia's own interests, and few can doubt that the *coup d'état*, witnessed in Bulgaria only two years since, came as a heavy blow to Russia's aims. The Arab is brought up to the belief that the regeneration of Islam is to be effected by force of arms, and the Russian that Constantinople, sooner or later, must be the property of his country. To allow any other Power to set foot there would be the ruin of her *esprit* in the East; but once there herself, Russia might set the rest of Europe at

defiance. The Black Sea would then become one great arsenal, and the doors would be closed in front of the point where Russia is most open to attack. Slowly and surely, however, she is working for that end. The life of the Turkish Empire in Europe may be drawing to a close ; but when Russia is established at Stamboul, and the Dardanelles are in her possession, an evil day will have dawned for the rest of Europe.

One of the most noticeable features in the country round Sevastopol is the great pyramidal monument at the Russian Kladbistché, or cemetery. It stands on the north side of the harbour, and marks the place where many who fell during the war lie buried. We were told that the Tzar insists upon the bodies of all the principal persons connected with the defence of the town being brought here for interment, and instances were given us of how his orders had been carried out in the case of those who have died only recently. In this way many illustrious men lie buried here, and amongst them Gortschakoff and Todleben.

But there is one point not far from the town which most Englishmen will go to first.

Thanks to a movement set on foot a few years since, we are no longer open to the reproach that we care not for the memories of our soldiers. The English burial grounds—and there were many in the Crimea—had been so much neglected, that their condition was little short of a national disgrace ; the boundary walls had, in some cases, almost disappeared ; flocks and herds wandered over the graves, and headstones and monu-

ments were thrown down and defaced.* All this, however, has now been remedied, and the English cemetery on Cathcart's hill is well cared for.

The monuments do not in many cases mark the place of interment, but, at least, the stones erected in loving memory are safe from further desecration. All those that could be moved have been brought here and ranged in rows; trees and flowers have been planted, and the ground enclosed within four stout walls. No finer site for a cemetery such as this could have been found. Far removed from any habitation, it stands on the highest ground in the neighbourhood, and just within sight of the walls of Sevastopol. Looking towards the town, the ground appears seamed and scored all over, and it is easy even now to trace out the lines of the English right and left attacks. Not a tree or shrub is to be seen for miles; nothing but bare stony slopes rising and falling one after the other towards the sea. The very isolation of the place insures its peace and quietude, and if without the walls the wind sweeps over the thistle-grown land, within is shelter and quietude. Here narrow paths lead between rows and rows of crosses and headstones; the flowers and trees are protected from the storm; and in time the cemetery will be a garden, a peaceful, shaded, God's acre, where many sacred memories are enshrined.

* A friend related to me that on one occasion he found a man at work with a nail, engraving his own name on a headstone over that of the officer in whose memory it had been put up. For the reader's peace of mind, I may mention that the delinquent was not an Englishman, and that he there and then received his deserts.

At the entrance to the enclosure is a small building, surmounted by a white cross. It is approached by a flight of steps, and within there is a room on the left where visitors write their names in a book, and on the right another, occupied by the custodian of the place. A passage leads through the building, and on descending a few steps you are in the cemetery. No Englishman could stand within these four walls without feeling more than usually impressed. Sixteen or more long rows, each of over thirty stones, lie before you. Some of these carry single names, names of generals, whose services are recorded in the page of history; names of officers of every rank, from colonel to ensign; names, too, of private soldiers who fell, like their superiors, fighting simply for their country, but reaping the same honour and reward, for all are equal here. A large number are monuments erected in general memory of those who fell in different corps, while others commemorate the losses in officers and men on certain days, and as you walk along the narrow paths and read one inscription after another, you are able to realise something of the sacrifices we made. Yet the stones on Cathcart's hill represent only a part of our losses; over and above these, there is the monument at the Alma to those who fell there; the rows and rows of grassy mounds at Scutari; the graves at Varna, and down by the harbour of Balaklava; as well as numbers of burial grounds scattered here and there, and resting places which have long since been forgotten. You may read on and on at the Cathcart's Hill

cemetery, but you will only learn a part. War casts its shadows far a-field, and England was prodigal of her sons in those days.

We left Sevastopol early one morning for Balaklava, driving out of the town past the Little Mamelon and across the lines of the French left attack. It was curious to notice the little change that had taken place anywhere. The trenches and parallels are as plainly marked as ever, though of course they have been much filled in by time and weather; but it would be no difficult task for one who had served in the war to follow out even now the events of different days, and to find many an old familiar spot among these lines.

As soon as we were beyond the trenches our driver left the road, and took us across country. The ground was as hard as iron, and it was difficult to imagine it a sea of sticky mud. Yet, so it is in winter, and there are few colder places than these vast plateaux over which wind and snow drive unchecked by even so much as a thorn bush. The country is no more cultivated than it was in the days of the war, but enormous flocks of sheep manage to obtain sustenance from the scanty herbage with which the ground is in part covered.

About two miles south-east of Sevastopol there is a white farmhouse surrounded by a vineyard of from ten to twelve acres, and in rear of this house are some ruined stables and outbuildings. The house was used as the British head-quarters during the war, and the buildings are those which gave shelter to a fortunate few in the great storm of November 14, '54. But further

interest attaches to the house by reason of its being the place where Lord Raglan died, and facing you as you go in at the door there is a white marble slab commemorating the fact.

It would be difficult, when you have before you the fields of Alma, Inkerman, Balaklava, the trenches round Sevastopol, the Malakoff, and the Redan, to single out the point of greatest interest; but to many of us no part of the country will appear more crowded with associations than that lying between Balaklava and Cathcart's Hill. Fighting takes place mostly at the front, but that labour about which there is no excitement, which goes on unceasingly behind an army in the field, and which is the source of its life, is performed on the line of communications. So it was in the Crimea, and in that part of the country to which I have just referred the long strain of months was practically fought out.

Standing at the point where the roads from Yalta and Balaklava meet, you are midway between Sevastopol and the harbour which formed our base; and here you look down upon the valley of Balaklava from the edge of the heights along which ran our defence works. These works can still be traced from Balaklava, past Kadi Koi, up the hill-side to the south of the plain, then northwards along the heights, across the Woronzoff road, and away in an almost unbroken line in rear of where the English army of the siege was encamped. Behind you is the road made by our troops, and still called the English road, and alongside it the line taken

by our railway. The road, though grass-grown in places, is still in excellent condition, but the railway can only be traced by the embankments which here and there still remain.

And what a tale these roads and works could tell ! The country looks peaceful now, and many a small white farmhouse has sprung up on the scene of former strife. The ground over which our cavalry charges took place is gradually being cultivated and enclosed, and, perhaps, in a few years the whole of it will be turned into corn-fields.

The remains of the redoubts out of which the Turks fled on the morning of the 25th of October are still plainly visible, and as you stand and look down upon the broad valley at your feet, you can picture to yourself every event of that memorable day.

Immediately below, is where the heavy cavalry was posted previous to the first charge ; a little more to the right, is the position occupied by the 4th Division, and the Guards and Highlanders ; farther down the hill-side, in the direction of Balaklava, the point where the 98rd so gallantly repulsed a force of cavalry four times their strength ; and away across the plain, the crowning point of interest—the site of the light cavalry charge.

There is no need to tell the story of Balaklava here ; but in years to come, when recollections of the 25th of October 1854 have almost faded away, and when the last man who took part in the events of that memorable day has joined his comrades, one episode will still live on. It matters not now who blundered, or who sent

that handful of men into the jaws of death; they fought and fell, hacking and hewing, as they might. And if, when swept away by a murderous fire, and enveloped in the embrace of a great host—if, in the shock of battle, when the cheer rang above the roar of struggling men, and arms were raised to strike yet once again, they went down, horse and man, what reck's it now? The charge of the Light Brigade will live in our annals; and on the march or by the camp-fire, when times are hardest, the whisper of the name will give new life and new heart; when squadrons are forming up; when the trumpet sounds the charge and the pace quickens; when the soldiers' hopes are realised, and the moment of glorious life has come at last, "Balaklava" will nerve the arm, and inspire men to deeds as gallant and as true.

It is absorbingly interesting to visit a country hallowed by such memories, and as we continued our journey down the road to Balaklava, our minds were filled with the story of a war, which, if one of the saddest, is nevertheless one of the most glorious in the annals of the British army. The road we now followed was the same down which an almost endless stream of sick and wounded flowed daily towards the hospitals and shipping; the same up which all the guns, shot, shell, powder, and provisions were dragged during the whole siege; and here deeds of heroism were performed sufficient to fill many a volume; not deeds of pluck and daring in the heat of action, but deeds conspicuous for staunch courage under suffering, and a spirit which

never flagged in days of unceasing toil. This is the side where war is shorn of all its glory, but where heroes are, perhaps, most plentiful.

Balaklava contains more houses than formerly, and an enterprising Frenchman has established a *Maison de Santé*; but the place is still only the quiet village of old days, and its natural and landlocked harbour puts you in mind of those of Albania, for it is surrounded by hills, and the exit to the sea is not at first discernible.

The remains of our work here are few; an old landing-stage or two, and, near a well, a long wooden drinking-trough looking as if it had been put up for the purpose of watering many horses at once. The ruins of the old castle still overlook the harbour, and on the walls, in letters two feet high, is the name of an English ship of war. About six hundred yards from the head of the harbour is a burial ground, now used by the inhabitants of the village. We were drawn towards it by seeing that the wooden gate-posts at the entrance were ornamented with two 32-lb. shot, but inside we could find no stone or cross with lettering in our language. No trace of our railway remains, and Balaklava, once the scene of so much activity, is now peaceful and quiet, and all recollections of the war have died out.

The evening before leaving Sevastopol we visited the Malakoff and the Redan. The Malakoff is being planted with trees, and though it still remains in a ruined condition, it is capable of being very easily turned again into formidable defence work. The Redan has scarcely been touched since the war, and has lost much of its

outline. It is easy to understand what a formidable place it must have been to attack, and to realise the terrible fire our troops had to face in crossing the open space between it and the trenches. No wonder they were mowed down in hundreds and driven back by sheer weight of lead, for the ground does not afford a particle of cover.

From these two vantage points one is able to form some idea of the present strength of Sevastopol. The town is in ruins but not so the fortifications, and a mile or two away from the place more than one massive earthwork is visible. Sevastopol is as strong if not stronger than ever, but when next England finds herself face to face with Russia it will not be in the neighbourhood of Sevastopol that the issue will be fought out.

The day was closing in as we drove back to the town; the labourers were trooping out in hundreds from the dockyard, each man uncovering and pausing for a moment as he passed the church at the new barracks; the bells across the water—some of those same bells that gave warning to our men in the trenches—were ringing out the day; and as we turned to look once more over the country, we caught sight of the small white cross on Cathcart's hill, standing out clearly against the eastern sky, and marking the place where those that fought now rest in peace.



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